ANTIOCH *the* REVIEW

FALL '61

Africa: Background to Change
MARSHALL H. SEGALL • ALAN P. MERRIAM • ABRAHAM ROSMAN • HELEN CODERE • STANLEY L. FISCHER

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Editor's Shop Talk

■ As several of the articles in this issue point out, far too much of our knowledge of Africa is based on stereotypes—and not very good stereotypes at that. Neither H. Rider Haggard nor Ernest Hemingway have prepared us for Nkrumah or Jomo Kenyatta. And while Technicolor has made us more familiar with the physical scenery of the once-dark continent, Hollywood has only added to the distorted view of the human scene. We hope future generations will not declare that Africa was lost on the back lots of Paramount.

If these articles help to dispell a few stereotypes in a few pockets of our knowledge, we feel the purposes of publishing will have been served.

However, we warn our readers that we may be contributing to a new, if equally fallacious, stereotype—that of a continent peopled roughly seventy-five per cent with natives and twenty-five per cent with well-endowed anthropologists. Our contributors assure us that this is not so. There is *not* a resident anthropologist for every fifty families. The anthropologist has replaced the witch doctor in very few tribal structures. And if you seem to be hearing a lot of stories about anthropologists and cannibals these days, look up some back issues of the *Reader's Digest* in your dentist's office and you'll find they are merely updated versions of the old missionary-and-cannibal jokes.

To demonstrate the invalidity of the anthropologist-in-Africa stereotype, we offer two exhibits in this issue: first, a field report from, not an

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anthropologist, but a psychologist (page 270); and second, an anthropologist who not only reports on a *political* event, but does so in verse (page 281). For the rest, well, anthropologists are still trustworthy explorers of people and societies which may be, if they are not already, very important to us.

■ In the course of working on this issue, we came across something that was old hat to the anthropologists but was new to us. The tribe in "Le Roi Est Mort" (page 281) is identified as Tutsi. This didn't mean a thing to us until we learned they were the graceful, seven-feet-tall Africans popularized in *Life* and the movies several years back—the Watutsi. Seems the prefixes *Wa* and *Ba*, in the Bantu dialects, indicate the plural or the group. In the same way, Alan P. Merriam writes (on page 293) of the witches called *bandoshi* and then describes a single *ndoshi*. These are among the Basongye. (One Songye, two Basongye? Not quite, because the singular prefix *Mu* comes in at this point—two Basongye, one Musongye—to further confuse things.)

We pass this bit of linguistic lore along for whatever value it may have to our readers. Our own inclination, however, is to plump for rapid and standard Anglicization of new African words. We do not do this in a spirit of chauvinism or neocolonialism; quite the contrary. African affairs are difficult enough for us to handle without having to cope with words beginning with *ng* or *mb*. We have no doubt that the flexible and permissive English language will eventually absorb these words in its own way. What we want to avoid is the two-century confusion we have had with our own native words, the long, hard road from *mish-i-ga-maw* to *Michigan*, from *mas-sa-wad-chu* to *Massachusetts*, to say nothing of the initial error of the Genoese navigator who called the Caribs *Indians*. As long as this five-century-old misnomer continues to confuse school children first hearing about Nehru's country, it will probably affect our view of the world.

■ While on the subject of language and Africa, we want to call attention to two other pieces in this issue. Words like "revolution" and "freedom" do not share universal definitions, as John H. Bunzel reminds us (page 319), and words take on the coloration of the history that made them as well as the history they make. Even, or especially, such a word-smith as Shakespeare found himself trapped by definitions as well as entranced by the quicksilver shifts of meanings as words are handled and used. But, as Sigurd Burckhardt demonstrates (page 369), words can create as well as illuminate a society. P.H.R.

Africa: Background to Change

Introduction

By ABRAHAM ROSMAN

■ To Americans, the sudden emergence of Africa as a significant area of the modern world has been marked by a sound with which we have been long familiar but which has always had a singular place in our tradition, the sound of trumpets proclaiming independence. With its independence, each of the new African states has drawn our attention and interest, and we have been made aware of the gaps in our knowledge of the peoples and cultures of Africa. For Africans, the cry has been "freedom," a cry associated with a remarkable group of African leaders who have taken their places in recent years with the cadre of international leadership.

Though the nation-states are new, the peoples and cultures are old; though the names have but began to appear in the American press yesterday, the cry for freedom has been shouted for a lifetime. And there have been Americans involved in African problems whose research and interests antedate the present wave of activity, and who have been instrumental in encouraging the interest of others.

The issues which draw our attention today are major issues: political stability, industrialization, education, health. But the problems presented by these issues disintegrate into the familiar patterns of politicians' phrases, with their stock set of ready solutions (more education, capital to build new industries, and so forth). The real

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problems gain form and depth when set into the matrix of the cultures which are themselves undergoing change. The straightforward solutions do not necessarily bring about expected results aimed at the elimination of critical problems. Adult literacy programs founder; introduction of fertilizer does not always increase productivity; medical programs meet unexpected resistance. Frequently the only real changes brought about are in the figures of the bureaucrat's ledger, which show continuous improvement (since the official's job depends on those figures) but represent no more than statistical fantasy. On paper the adult literacy program has been a remarkable success, but despite the changes in the literacy rate no more people can read than previously could. The kinds of changes which go to the heart of changing Africa are the changes in the coherent ways of life of African peoples, the changes in their cultures. The differences between African cultures can be enormous. Insofar as the processes of change affecting them are the same (or similar), they will undergo similar changes; insofar as there are important differences between cultures, their reactions to such changes will vary.

The articles which follow in this issue of the *Antioch Review*, as well as this introduction, find a common theme in their attempt to present some aspects of the reality of Africa today. Since the cultures of Africa all share to some degree in the rapid changes affecting the continent, this common element, *change*, forms a background to the entire scene. The countries differ. The methods of investigation, and the manner in which observations and impressions are communicated, vary. But despite these differences, the underlying themes provide unity.

To gain adequate perspective on the larger changes occurring in Africa, the unit of study must be the individual culture, and indeed it becomes apparent in these articles that the focus of attention is on a culture, on several cultures and their inter-relations, on the relation of the new unit of organization, the nation-state, to individual cultures, and on the relation between individual cultures and the industrial West. Cultures are not fragile, ephemeral things. They are persistent and adaptable. They provide an integrated and meaningful environment for the bulk of their members, who find significance for their behavior when they see their lives in relation

to the larger patterns of their culture. It is true that individual members do not always find the security they seek in their culture. For them old age does not bring the harmony which comes from knowing that one has lived a fruitful and moral life, in accordance with the expectations of one's culture. In situations of rapid culture change, one would expect to find such troubled individuals in increasing numbers, for in times of rapid change expectations of what tomorrow will bring become uncertain. The guides to behavior which characterize a stable culture are no longer clearly marked, and individuals are subject to great conflict.

Segall's article discussing the Banyankole of Uganda makes the point that, despite the appearance of upheaval which modern Africa presents to the external observer, Africans engaged in the day-to-day matters involved in the course of living one's life do see consistency. One can rely on yesterday's events to predict what tomorrow will be like. Banyankole culture, though changing and changing rapidly, still retains the integration which characterizes an ongoing culture. Individual members of the society, by and large, do not exhibit the stresses assumed always to accompany acculturation.

While Segall focusses his attention on the process of acculturation, Merriam, in his article on the Basongye of the Congo, turns to an analysis of the religious philosophy of a people. Merriam did research among the Basongye in 1959-1960 and has elsewhere described the crises which gripped the Congo during his stay there. Basongye culture as described by Merriam here must be pictured against the turbulence of recent Congolese history; in the light of those events, the stability of Basongye culture emerges still more powerfully. The belief system of the Basongye persists; it does not prevent the Basongye from keeping pace with the rapid changes of the recent years. Again there emerges a picture of adaptability which resolves the conflicts created by demands of the modern world, conflicts which would seem to be irreconcilable with traditional societies.

In her long poem, "Le Roi Est Mort," Helen Codere is dealing

with a somewhat more complex social situation. The events in Ruanda described revolve about an explosive situation which did blow apart shortly thereafter. Three sub-cultures are bound together in Ruanda under the traditional rule of the Tutsi king. The role of the colonial power, in this case Belgium, emerges into prominence here. Political power, and ultimately the structure of relations between Bahuta and Batutsi, is the critical issue, in anticipation of shortly-to-be-gained independence. These events are somewhat unusual in that this is a situation of explosive change.

Fischer's article on recent African novels also underlines the violent and dramatic aspects of culture change. One would expect this to be so. Africans expressing themselves through novels represent the most acculturated examples of African society; novels are clearly not traditional African forms of expression. Fischer points out the autobiographical nature of these novels: the authors themselves represent an acculturated and sophisticated elite group, continuously in contact with Western culture, completely involved with the political, social, and economic aspects of freedom. The characters they create move in a world of political action, a world of cities, of men who have left their tribal cultures. This is an integral part of modern Africa, and yet this life is always set against another life, an older life which evokes a wide variety of emotional responses—that of the tribal cultures. Tribal life is always present as a complement to urban, acculturated behavior and values. It may be viewed with scorn and contempt, or with yearning and nostalgia, but it cannot be dismissed. In the novels by Africans we see a concentration on the individual, on conflicts which mirror the struggle of the individual to mark a course for himself; this is but another aspect of the general problem of culture change.

The dimensions of change can be set forth in terms of polarities, each of which provides a slightly different perspective on the African scene. An educated elite stands against the illiterate tribesman; national states contrast with a disturbing number of tribal entities which vary enormously in size and speak their own distinct languages; cities stand in sharp contrast to rural village Africa; individual, widely varying religious philosophies, lumped together under the rubric of paganism, are set against the universal religions, Christianity and Islam. Behind all of this hangs the backdrop of

colonialism, an era in the history of the Western world which is now coming to an end but which leaves its heritage in the European settlers spotted over the African continent and in the attitudes which remain in the minds of Africans.

I would like to consider the relation of these variables to culture change through my own research in still another African state, Nigeria. My work has been with the Kanuri of Bornu Province in the far northeastern section of the country. Nigeria, the most populous state in Africa, has been independent for just over one year. Here can be seen many of the characteristic problems of modern Africa.

The problems of achieving political unity in a large multicultural state are formidable. Prior to independence, the three regions comprising Nigeria had been granted regional autonomy. Each region is dominated by one major tribe and contains numerous smaller ones, all speaking distinctly different languages. The three major parties of Nigeria today had their origins in each of the three regions and each is strongly identified with a particular tribal group. No political party has as yet achieved the status of a national party, though all are striving for this. The South, which includes the Eastern and Western regions, is predominantly Christian; the third region, the North, is predominantly Moslem. Many peoples, in both the North and the South, retain their own religious systems and are neither Christian nor Moslem. Because initial contacts with the British were naturally along the coast, the southern regions have had a much longer period of contact with Western culture. The British first entered Northern Nigeria a scant fifty years ago and consequently have had much less influence on the cultures of the North, such as the Kanuri, than on those of the South, like the Ibo and Yoruba. Many more individuals from the South have been educated at Western schools, and they suffer from the disillusion mentioned by Segall. There are not enough jobs for them, particularly jobs which they consider commensurate with their educational level. As a result, many have migrated north to take jobs as clerks with the government and with private industry. Northerners, fearing that they would be over-run by better educated Southerners, have passed laws giving preference to Northerners for civil service

employment. In this way potential rifts are turned into open conflict. An additional irony occurs in the search for a single national language. There is no real lingua franca in Nigeria. In the North, Hausa is the language of trade, but few Southerners speak Hausa. Hausa was chosen, nonetheless, as the national language. Despite the fact that those who have received their education in Western schools all speak English, English was not chosen as the national language, presumably because of its association with the colonial period.

The North differs from the South in still another way. In addition to being predominantly Moslem, the North has for centuries been united through powerful indigenous political kingdoms. Upon assuming control of Northern Nigeria, the British, in accordance with their principles of indirect rule, retained the existing political structure. In the past the religious and the political realms were not clearly distinguished; the two were considered as one, as so frequently happens with Moslem states. The result has been to maintain and preserve the cultural integration of Northern peoples within its larger politico-religious structure. This factor, taken with the shorter period of contact with Western culture, has meant that cultures of the Nigerian North retain much more of their unity, and Northerners are far less acculturated to the industrial West.

The rural people of Northern Nigeria, who comprise the bulk of the populace, see themselves in terms of their cultural identity. Most are unaware of the real significance for them of that newly created entity, Nigeria. They owe allegiance to the traditional leaders in their cultures. The political leadership of the North, though deriving from the traditional sources of power, is itself part of the educated and sophisticated elite. Though the larger population is only beginning to become aware of national problems, the Northern leaders who are involved in unifying and shaping modern Nigeria are very aware of these problems.

In the North the educated group has derived largely from the aristocracy, though this is less true today than in the past. These individuals have found adequate employment, by and large in provincial and regional government. Through these channels they have achieved individual success, at the same time tying present-day political leadership to the social structure of the past. It is interesting

to note that the nascent opposition party of the North does find its primary strength in the small group of disgruntled educated young men who, for one reason or another, have not found satisfactory jobs. Its strength is entirely in the large towns and cities, and in this sense the cities are foci of ferment and culture change.

I have been discussing broad areas, such as the unity of national states, the new educated elite, and urbanism, as they relate to cultural changes in Nigeria. I would like to turn now to the heritage of colonialism. In the problem of the choice of a Nigerian national tongue can be seen some of the intricate attitudes which colonialism leaves in its wake. Nigeria shares with all of West Africa the good fortune of not having a settler problem. Europeans have never settled as large land owners in Nigeria as they did in other parts of Africa, notably in the Union of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, and Kenya. But when a colonial power relinquishes its rule over an area, ties remain that can be found on many levels. A former British colony like Nigeria will continue to communicate with the Western world through the English language. Nigerians who have been educated in British schools will remain linked to British culture, if for no other reason than the bond of a common language. Among themselves educated Nigerians from differing cultures generally must also speak English. This problem is reflected in the novels discussed by Fischer. Written in the language learned from the colonial culture, they indicate not only the educated status of the African novelist but also the larger group with whom he seeks to communicate. This group can only include Europeans and other educated Africans. In addition to these novels by Africans, another interesting source of information will be the body of literature in African vernacular languages which will grow increasingly more important in time.

The legacies of colonialism pervade all aspects of behavior, affecting ruler and ruled. A primary symptom is ambivalence. This can be seen in the British colonial official who is proud of the accomplishments of former British colonies, since their present dignified behavior on the world scene is perceived to have been brought about by a wise colonial policy which fostered responsible self government. This attitude is in contrast to only slightly veiled wishes, voiced by that same individual, that a recently freed colony

fall flat on its face, demonstrating to the world that it is unable to govern itself and that the colonial power is needed as badly as ever. In the colonial official at work in a colony that will shortly achieve its independence, this ambivalence can once again be observed as he trains an African to replace him. On the one hand he wishes the African to do well, since this will be a credit to the European's teaching; on the other hand he wants to demonstrate his own indispensability. As Segall points out, the ambivalence of the European civil servant creates the conditions for a self-fulfilling prophecy.

A mirror image of this ambivalence is engendered in educated Africans, but the effects on personality in this case are perhaps even more profound. The very acculturated African who has grown up during the colonial period has taken over many of the values of the culture of the ruling power. One of the real tragedies of colonialism is that the acculturated individual may, frequently does, take over attitudes of scorn for traditional tribal ways. This too he learns from his rulers and masters. But it does not end there. He now finds that, despite his new values, he is still unacceptable to the dominant culture. In fact—and this is the greatest irony and the root of the tragedy—he is despised because of his attempts to move into a new culture. To members of the colonial culture, the acculturated African who has assumed their values and who behaves according to their cultural patterns has demonstrated once again the meanness and the worthlessness of African cultures. For his attempts to rise and "imitate" their ways, he earns only their scorn.

Fischer, in his discussion of the novel *A Wreath for Udomo*, by Peter Abrahams, is alluding to this when he says that Udomo "stands between two cultural systems and, while rejecting both, attempts to build on a base of the old a new of which he is disdainful." The very acculturated individual is rejected and himself rejects both cultures, the old from which he originated, and the new upon which he has modelled himself. Yet, because of his peculiar situation, he is the only one in a position to see the directions which the future is likely to take. On him then fall the heavy responsibilities of leadership, and it is this leadership which alone provides meaning to his life, for there are no other alternatives open to him. He can never return to the traditional culture which he long ago rejected, and he now sees himself as he is seen by the dominant

culture—as someone to be despised and scorned. His guilt can only be expiated through accomplishments from which future generations will benefit.

These then are some implications of the changes occurring in Africa, on the cultural level and on the individual level. The complexity of the total situation is very great. No one man can do more than look at a small part of the whole. The methods used to investigate these problems is well illustrated in the articles which follow. They range from the social sciences to the humanities. Merely to observe and note some aspect of the change is but one part of the larger task. The difficult problem of communicating one's observation still remains. Merriam's article on the Basongye follows a long tradition of scrupulous anthropological description and analysis; Segall, however, brings the techniques of the social psychologist to bear on problems outside the scope of most of his colleagues, and he is able to shed new light because of his fresh approach. Novels by Africans provide a rich source of information from an entirely different direction. Viewed in this context, as Fischer has done, they supplement our understanding of the material gathered by social scientists and can indeed provide a source of new insights for the social scientist. Lastly, the search for new forms of expression and communication can be seen in Codere's poem through which she describes her observations. Though her primary purpose in Ruanda was to carry on anthropological research (which she did indeed do) she has sought as well to communicate her observations in ways which are not traditionally anthropological. In this sense, the articles comprising this issue represent a small sample of the variety of approaches to the understanding of changing Africa.

A Psychological View of Changing Africa

By MARSHALL H. SEGALL

■ Events of the past decade have done much to demolish the old clichés that once substituted for popular knowledge of Africa and its peoples. The mass media, which formerly reinforced the image of an Africa inhabited by primitive savages, their undeveloped thought-processes dominated by irrational fears and damaging misconceptions of the forces governing nature, tend these days to create an altogether different image. The new image is epitomized by zealous Africans who seem overnight to have traversed centuries of stagnation, appearing suddenly as aspiring members of the twentieth century. The basic ingredient in the new image is change. No one today dares speak of Africa without emphasizing it. Witness this number of the *Antioch Review* devoted to "changing Africa." This concept has been the focus of numerous articles and television programs impressing upon millions of Americans a mood of revolutionary upheaval. The image that has resulted is one of untutored multitudes emerging from the darkness being led blindly by ambitious but incompetent leaders in an effort to cope with the demands of a suddenly all-too-complex world. Whereas not so many years ago Africa would be conjured up by the tiresome phrase, "the white

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man's burden," today "the winds of change" evoke that response. Is this as it should be? Is this image any closer to reality than were the old clichés it is gradually displacing?

Certainly an image dominated by a mood of dramatic upheaval is realistic at one level of analysis. Fundamental changes in political status have been precipitous in recent months. The recent Congo crisis, with its attendant violence and resultant political chaos, cannot be viewed as merely the most recent phase of a gradual social evolution. Or can it? In any case, perhaps it should be asked whether the recurrent Congo crises, or the Angola bloodbaths, or the ominous tensions in the Union of South Africa, constitute a basis for valid inferences regarding the basic realities of African behavior. How much closer to a valid conception of Africans as people has our awareness of these disturbing events brought us? I would venture to suggest not much.

While not denying that the winds of change are blowing over Africa, I would resist the view that these winds are necessarily of gale force. In many instances gentle breezes would represent a more appropriate metaphor. The relatively undramatic nature of ongoing social change was vividly impressed upon me during an extended period of field research in an East African society in 1959 and 1960. My prior expectations regarding behavioral manifestations of social change, which I must confess were consonant with the image I am here deploring, were rapidly destroyed by contacts with the mundane realities. Among the most salient features of my experiences in Africa were the continuing encounters with concrete evidence that the Westernization of Africa began generations ago. That fact is widely known; yet somehow its obvious implications seem not to have registered. The most striking among these is the great difficulty one has in many parts of Africa in finding a man whose behavior isn't somehow European-like. Perhaps even more shocking is the "discovery" that many people behave in European ways without their being aware of the European-ness of their behavior. In many cases, such behavior has been acquired not from European models but from other Africans.

While the picture that emerged from my experience is not necessarily generalizable to all parts of Africa, it is probably closer to a general reality than is the picture of continent-wide drastic up-

heavals. My own observations were made in the Ankole District of Uganda, among the Banyankole, one of the ten tribal groups living in that East African British Protectorate. There are tribes in Uganda that would be rated as considerably more Europeanized than the Banyankole (e.g., the Baganda, whose area includes the thriving urban center of Kampala) and others considerably less (e.g., the nomadic Karamajong who roam the plains of eastern Uganda with their cows). Moreover, greater differences in this respect would be found in other regions of Africa. However unique the Banyankole may be, consideration of the realities of their day-to-day life in this purportedly turbulent decade alters sharply the conception of the changes sweeping Africa.

The popular image would have it that Westernization has been sudden and superficial, occurring all over the continent in a series of drastic upheavals. On the contrary, among the Banyankole, Westernization has been a slow and subtly pervasive process. In many respects, the Banyankole behave today much the way they behaved before the nineteenth-century European explorers penetrated East Africa on their search for the source of the Nile and other more practical treasures. On the other hand, all Banyankole live in an environment which has long contained elements of Western culture and they seem to behave more or less appropriately. While no one among them could be confused with a European, neither could anyone be accused of living in the past, in any but the most poetic of senses. Further, if these people are caught up in a traumatic change of life, continually forced to choose between primitive and civilized alternatives, they certainly are not aware of it. Neither was I.

As a social scientist, I would need no reason to challenge the notion of an overnight discovery and acceptance of the trappings of civilization other than a conviction that the evidence contradicts it.

However, there are other reasons which I believe are worth spelling out in some detail. For one, an image of drastic change implies political immaturity. The premise that Africans are not yet ready for political independence is generally accepted, even by some who recognize the moral force behind the doctrine of self-determination. While it is true that the numbers of trained personnel and material resources required for the most efficient conduct of good government are severely lacking in Africa, it is not true that such people and resources are totally absent. Depending greatly upon the manner in which the colonial powers conducted themselves during recent decades, African areas vary tremendously in this regard. In Uganda, a most impressive pool of well educated men is available. Hundreds have passed through Makerere College, the University College of East Africa, and hundreds more have degrees from British, American, and other universities. A number of these men possess professional or advanced academic degrees. While illiteracy is still rampant, thousands of young people are in primary and secondary schools. The school system is seriously underdeveloped, but there *is* a school system, and thousands have passed through it. Many of the young people currently enrolled are the second generation, in some instances the third, in their families to receive education. Education, while far from satisfactory at present, did not commence yesterday. And for all its weaknesses, it has borne fruit.

Secondly, the view that Africa is changing drastically seems also to imply that drastic change was necessary if Africa were to deserve a place in the twentieth century. This in turn implies that prior to change, the "level of civilization" was very low indeed. It thus appears that the new image of Africa is not diametrically opposed to the old one; rather it seems wholly consistent with the old view of primitive, uncivilized savages, perpetuating the stupidities of past centuries. It now becomes easier for a world which has long nourished that stereotype to accept the experience of witnessing highly skilled and obviously cultured Africans speaking out to the world. Forced to consider from where such men could have come, it is concluded that they somehow emerged suddenly from the primitive masses, that such men could not number more than a pitiful few, and that for all their superficial grace and sophistication, savage hearts beat just under the skin. In fact, a complex issue is

being touched upon here. For many Africans who find themselves in this role, a problem of cultural identification exists. Some are not sure how European-like they want to be. A few fear the eventual loss of much that they value in their indigenous cultures. (The phenomenon of *la negritude* is, in part, a manifestation of these feelings.) But if some highly Europeanized Africans do struggle to maintain Africanisms in their own behavior, it is certainly not because they are incapable of thinking and feeling like Europeans. For the rest of the world to think so is dangerous indeed. To underestimate the degree to which African leaders and a large proportion of its masses are totally immersed in twentieth-century realities is to misinterpret their intentions, their needs, their determination, and their potential.

It is the misinterpretation of the Africans' potential that is likely to be most damaging. Perhaps it is inevitable in a world still not free from the pseudo-scientific doctrines of racial inferiorities that the accomplishments of Africans are not yet accepted at face value and appreciated for what they are. Outstanding accomplishments are viewed as freakish, minor failures as proof of inherent inferiority. This attitude is like that of the disgruntled European civil servant, who, in response to a directive from above, transfers administrative responsibility to a clerk who heretofore had been considered incapable of understanding anything more than the sterile routine of a single phase of a bureaucratic operation. Upon assuming responsibility for which training was never given (on the assumption it would be futile), the clerk eventually errs. "An African will always let you down," is the conclusion. The prophecy has been fulfilled, the futility of training further demonstrated. The myth of racial inferiority in our own country has led to many similar self-fulfilling prophecies which in turn perpetuate the myth, at a cost so great we now question it more intensely than ever before. To maintain the view that Africans behaving like civilized beings are exceptions, that their civilized demeanor is a veneer, that at base they are like children, can only detract seriously from the slow progress we have made toward enlightenment in this domain.

Bold headlines attest the urgency we must attach to acquiring real knowledge of Africa and its peoples. Much remains to be learned. Stereotypes and clichés, albeit new ones, still dominate our thinking about Africans. Superficial, journalistic accounts, replete

with predetermined value judgments, consonent with existing myth, are no more enlightening than the sensational accounts that came out of Africa during the years prior to the development of scholarly ethnographic reporting. In recent years, the ethnographers have been joined by social scientists from other disciplines who see in contemporary Africa a vast natural laboratory in which to test their developing theories and contribute to a real understanding of Africans and their problems. Psychologists are among the most recent recruits to the rapidly growing army of social scientists drawn to Africa.

To date there have been few psychologists engaged in research in Africa, but their numbers are sure to grow as more come to recognize the legitimate, substantive problems that await investigation in Africa and elsewhere. My own research in Uganda was not unrelated to theoretical concerns in the scientific study of behavior. Indeed, one study completed there could not otherwise be justified. It concerned a basic problem in the study of human visual perception (the relative contributions of native endowment and early experience to adult visual habits), a problem which has been studied in laboratories for many years. In co-operation with another psychologist, D. T. Campbell, and M. J. Herskovits, a leading anthropologist noted for his African interests and contributions, a cross-cultural study was designed in the hope that data of relevance to this long-standing theoretical controversy might be brought to bear from a hitherto unsuspected source. That some of the subjects whose behavior was studied happen to be African is not particularly relevant in this study; the data will say little about Africans per se; rather, it is hoped they will be informative with respect to perceptual behavior in human beings in general.

Almost at the opposite pole of relevance is a study done among the Banyankole of the hopes and expectations of secondary school students. Utilizing a technique first employed by the psychologists Gillespie and Allport, I sought materials descriptive of a group of young people who constitute a sample of the emerging elite of East Africa. Since Gillespie and Allport's techniques and instruments were employed, it is possible to draw comparisons across my data and theirs, comparisons which are likely to be of theoretical interest. At the same time, it is possible to stress the practical value of whatever findings have emerged from this study, on the grounds that it

is essential that the views of these young people with respect to their own futures be known. From this group surely will come some of the leaders of Uganda in its steady approach to political independence. Who are these young men, what sorts of attitudes and aspirations do they have? To what extent do they resemble young people everywhere; to what extent are they unique? To provide partial answers to questions like these, the students were asked to write an essay entitled "My Autobiography from Now to the Year 2,000." Upon completing this, they were administered a questionnaire containing fifty items designed to elicit in more structured fashion a variety of attitudes and values relevant to their future orientations.

Although this is not the place to make a detailed research report, some of the more obvious, general findings can be cited here. Perhaps the single most striking characteristic of these 158 young Africans is a very salient desire for more education, training, and knowledge of the world outside their immediate ken. In response to the question, "What two things would you most like that you don't have now?" more than fifty per cent indicated more schooling, training, and foreign travel. Approximately thirty per cent made identical responses to the less leading question, "If you should get a large sum of money five years from now, what would you do with it?" This potent awareness of the outside world and intense desire for more exposure to it suggests an enthusiastic acceptance of Westernization. This enthusiasm may not be altogether good, for it will in some instances lead to disappointment; a considerable amount of disillusionment has already been detected among African students currently enrolled in American universities and colleges. This disillusionment is, of course, compounded of many factors, including unrealistic expectations and a distaste for the chores that must be performed for pocket money, such labor being considered by many Africans, schooled in European as contrasted with American traditions, beneath the dignity of a student.

Good or bad, the enthusiasm exists and must be taken into account by the vast numbers of teachers, government officials, and others who will soon be dealing face-to-face with these young Africans. Very shortly, some 160 young Americans will begin teaching in the secondary schools of East Africa. It is essential that they

recognize and utilize to best advantage the mood of eager acceptance that is so characteristic of their students.

They must also be aware of the somewhat unrealistic levels of aspiration that many young Africans possess. Two questionnaire items dealing with occupational choice and expectations indicated that slightly more than half would like a highly skilled occupation, while hardly less than that expect such good fortune. Since Uganda is an underdeveloped agricultural nation whose economy will for a long time be unable to support many highly skilled jobs (however needed are the services that could be performed by people in such jobs), the discrepancy between the occupational desires and the occupational realities is a potential source of stress worth detecting.

For all the problems these young men will face upon completion of school, it is perhaps surprising that ninety-seven per cent describe themselves as "hopeful" or "enthusiastic," rejecting the alternative responses "indifferent," "resigned," and "embittered." (Gillespie and Allport reported that eight per cent of an American sample chose from among the three pessimistic alternatives, twenty-five per cent of a French sample so described themselves, and so did twenty-seven per cent of an Israeli sample.) This enthusiastic mood is more likely to prevail if the outside world can formulate policy based on factual knowledge of the wants and expectations of Africa's emerging, rapidly growing elite.

Facts like these, while not very meaningful when presented out of an interpretative context, are indicative of the very least psychologists can do by way of contributing information regarding the living human beings who populate contemporary Africa. To the layman, our research reports may often seem sterile and dehumanized, with personalities lost in the welter of statistical extractions. It must be kept in mind that however abstract our statements may seem, they are based ultimately on careful observations of the behavior of real people. We will sometimes err in observation, we will frequently be trapped into erroneous interpretation, but we act in good faith, aware of our limitations, and armed with the best techniques with which our discipline has thus far provided us. Studies like this one, however tentative its conclusions, surely can be expected to provide some small increment to knowledge of

peoples heretofore known only through the myopic lens of stereotype and cliché.

It has been the basic premise of this paper that the almost overwhelming mass of materials currently to be found in the mass media dealing with contemporary Africa has contributed to an erroneous image of the nature and implications of the ongoing Westernization of that continent. The last of my Banyankole studies that I shall here describe bears directly on this issue. This study concerned some psychological aspects of the Westernization process, focusing on individual differences in rate and extent of Westernization, with a view toward determining the relevant personality factors which might facilitate or retard the process, as well as on possible behavioral implications of becoming Westernized. The study might well be described as a search for variables in the life history of an individual which are related to his acquisition of a Western cultural orientation. Unlike most anthropological studies of acculturation, which rightly focus on changing societies, this study attempts an analysis of the behavioral changes which underlie culture change.

A 1-in-1,000 sample of adult Banyankole, constituting 123 individuals interviewed each for several hours, provided the data. The interview dealt with personal history and present habits, including education, language training and usage, dress, diet, religious practices, and a variety of attitudes and values. Tests of specific and general abilities were included, as were questions designed to assess the nature and amount of factual information possessed. The nature of the interview can best be conveyed by a sample of the items it contained:

> Please tell me everything you had to eat yesterday.
>
> How often do you pray to your ancestors?
>
> If your daughter were given the opportunity to study at Makerere College, would you permit her to?
>
> What would you like your children to have that you never had?
>
> What sickness can a Munyankole medicine man treat better than a European physician?
>
> When a visitor comes to call, does your wife ever join the company in the sitting room?
>
> Who was Charles Dickens?
>
> Can a man with no cows be considered wealthy?
>
> Most Banyankole are lazy. Do you agree?

The way in which responses to these items, and the hundreds like them, will be analyzed is too complex to describe adequately here. In essence, the analysis commences with the generation of hypotheses, some based on existing theories of acculturation, others based on intuitive hunches, regarding the different responses likely from people occupying different positions along a hypothetical dimension of Western cultural orientation. Then the hypothesized response patterns are subjected to an empirical item analysis whereby stable clusters of inter-related behaviors are discerned. From such an analysis can come an empirically based definition of "a Western cultural orientation," a definition which is simultaneously a measure, permitting relatively precise indication of the degree to which a given individual possesses such a trait-complex. Using the resultant index of Westernization as a criterion variable, numerous antecedent and consequent relations may be sought and explored.

A detailed report of the results of this analysis is now in preparation. The most characteristic aspect of the findings is a very impressive range of behavioral and attitudinal differences which clearly challenges any conception of a monolithic, static, primitive society. Technological and ideological innovations are permeating Ankole, as individuals in diverse positions become exposed to new and challenging concepts. For some the effects have been minor, for others they have been drastic. None, however, seemed totally free of behavior that was of European origin. Another striking feature of the data is the apparent ease with which European responses are assimilated. It seems impossible, in view of the data collected in this study, to over-estimate the adaptiveness of the Banyankole. Significantly, new institutions, ideas, values, and the like do not seem to displace all the old ones; rather, the new behavioral patterns related to them are somehow integrated with the old. Thus, while modern medical practices are warmly accepted by most Banyankole, their traditional cures are not discarded. Relatives visiting hospitalized Banyankole seldom fail to bring with them traditional native remedies. Not a single person in my entire sample denied having used a native remedy at one time or another, including a highly Europeanized medical assistant. Other examples could be cited to indicate that for the Banyankole, Europeanization does not imply complete abandonment of traditional practices.

Individuals become Europeanized in a selective way, each retaining from the old way whatever seems more valuable than the new. This means, of course, that most individuals should be able to acquire much Western cultural orientation without undue stress. To suppose that Westernization in Africa is necessarily a source of stress for the individuals undergoing it is to forget that human beings the world over are continually incorporating new experiences and assimilating new response patterns, with only a small proportion of them finding the process damaging to their personalities. To assume that Africans are more susceptible to such stress is unfounded. To assume that the cultural changes to which Africans must adjust are significantly more drastic than those to which we ourselves are adjusting may also be a serious error. The Banyankole, and presumably people like them all over Africa, are not living in two worlds, one of them primitive, the other modern, but in a real world in which elements of contemporary Western civilization are truly intermingled with an equally contemporary "traditional" culture. This totality is the only reality to which adjustment is demanded. Few Banyankole are aware of the origins of the separate elements of that cultural totality; the few who are aware are not overly concerned. The response of most Banyankole has been, and very likely will continue to be, an unquestioning, gradual, pervasive readjustment to the changing demands of an increasingly complex world.

To an outsider looking in on Africa, the winds of change will, probably for a long while, continue to appear of gale force. That such an appearance is deceptive has been the major argument of this paper. Continuing research, it may be hoped, will delineate the complex realities of changing Africa so that the current stereotypes, as invidious as the old ones, will cease to substitute for genuine knowledge.

Le Roi Est Mort, Vive le Roi!

By HELEN CODERE

Le roi est mort. July 26, 1959.

The king is dead.
He was out of his proper country at the time,
spending the weekend in a European town.
He died suddenly of a heart attack.
Even when non-kings die like that
it is an occasion for much comment;
and there are many now living on the thousands of hills
who conclude automatically
that he has been poisoned.

Their reason is the history of their kings
who up to a generation ago
were what we, too, knew kings to have been:
puissant and capricious,
in courts of flatterers
and scheming kinsman,
consulting sorcerers.
There was an added element of terror.
Consider European history without certain laws of succession!
With the king deciding on his male successor
and confiding in three special councillors,

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separately, of course.
And with the Queen Mother quite officially active
in all intrigues.

In the three centuries of their seven centuries' history
which are not mythologized
there have been twenty-five kings
and as many coups d'états
and many more fratricides.
There were warrior kings and master politicians
and there were peaceful kings and master politicians.
Both kinds used Draconian techniques against opposition.
In their eyes the crimes of revolt and infidelity,
crimes against themselves,
were the only crimes.
Mutára III, as his name indicates,
was one of the peaceful kings.

His photographs show him
to have had the classic beauty of his caste:
most tall and thin,
thin-nosed, sharp-chinned,
and with the edges of his eyelids
most finely carved of all.

The hearsay of the Europeans
is agreed on several points:
that he looked his part,
drank straight whiskey by the glass,
was intelligent and refined,
and, all things considered,
was a good king,
and probably died at a good time
for himself and for his country,
—even at forty-nine.

I, who had never seen any part of the death of a king,
was one of those who waited at the royal residence
for the arrival of the hearse.
It was an exotic scene, but set in dust

and without the panoply or color
I should have expected.
All the religious personages—
His Majesty was Catholic—
were robed in brown-dusty white.
The white-uniformed "V" of soldiers with spears
was not very white and their red fezzes were not enough red.
The khaki of the other small group of soldiers,
the ones who marched foolishly about in little figures
before they took their place in one of the two lines of the "V,"
was, of course, merely the color
of a little darker, greener dust.

In general the Europeans there
mostly in an official capacity
did not look as fresh as the women of the king's family
or his brothers and several chiefs—he had no son—
who favored blue suits and dark ties against their white shirts.

The people had clothing as drab
as only poverty plus dust
could have made it.

The casket had come two hundred miles
in a black panel truck with open sides.
The wreaths and the flowers were red-brown dust.

There were two very white things:
the first was the astonishingly white gloves of the wife
of the Belgian Privy-Councillor to his ex-majesty,
the second was a bowl-shaped hat worn by a near-pygmy
all the more remarkable for being almost the only hat in the crowd,
certainly the only really white one and the only one of its kind.

The near-pygmy helped push the casket out of the hearse.
I must discover what, if anything, he was to the king,
for there was a special relationship with his caste
and he looked the part.

That is about all there was to it.
The casket placed in a black draped niche

at the royal entrance to the royal residence,
some few Latin prayers,
then the king's womenfolk and later the others present
going by in an unorganized way.

A very few women shed tears, but soundlessly,
not even all the women of the king's family cried.
The crowd seemed cold and passive.

Were the people stupefied by the suddenness of it,
as the wife of the Belgian Privy-Councillor to his ex-majesty claimed?
Were the people full of their old proverbs
about the mortality even of sorcerers and kings,
about the rich and powerful
who did not want company in their grief
knowing there was just cause for others to feel some pleasure
and fearing they might look up and see it?

Mutára III was a good king,
but the age of kings is dust,
and the age of peasants in poverty is dust;
and the age of white gloves, and white uniforms, and white
vestements?

He was a good king.
But he could not have been good enough to efface history,
and it was the opinion of the Europeans
that, although he had done some good things,
he, had he lived, would not have made history.
Europeans, however, are often wrong
about the meaning and presence and unrolling of history.

Vive le roi! July 28, 1959.

The coup d'état establishing the king before the last
was made of death and ferocity.
There were self-immolations of whole families of nobles
in the thick straw huts
that burning served the purpose of a kinder death
than other deaths as sure.
This new-dead king
was European-made.
The king new-made today
was beneficiary
of a more traditional coup d'état.

On the return to the royal residence for the funeral
the scene was quite different.
European protocol and uniforms
were all involved in heavy show.
There was little dust at first.
The crowd, not very large, was kept well back.
The courtyard was mostly for the Europeans.
Even many of the numerous clergy had cameras.
The white uniforms and habits were still white.
Everyone arrived on schedule:
the Chiefs, the king of the southern kingdom,
last the Governor-General topped with a white-plumed helmet.
The Chiefs were pall-bearers.
The hearse left on schedule,
and the cortège was systematic.

I did not attend the mass
but waited outside the church with a crowd of people
bigger than the one at the residence.
There were no incidents,
unless you count the brief stampede in the crowd
when the police threatened the people back
with their big white batons.
It could be presumed
that everything was going along properly

at this first Christian funeral
of this land's first Christian king.

But on the drive to the cemetery
the tension mounted choking
like the dust that ran in red rivulets
down the windshield
and somehow filled the oven-hot car
with all its windows tight-closed.
This language was used as a secret language,
because we had meantime picked up a stranger.
"It seems that there is some unrest in the region."
"The rumor is the Europeans poisoned him."
"Last night two cars [European cars understood] were molested.
A man [European man understood] in one of them received a
head-wound."
In the dust outside men were moving quickly,
as quickly as the dust-drenched column of cars.
They were carrying lances of theatrical aspect
or bows and three or so long iron-pointed arrows,
as often as they were carrying the baton and pruning-hook
of everyday symbol and utility.
The poverty of the weapons startled me—
such rudimentary machines of wood and iron
in the age of a science of weapons
that only millions of rich taxpayers can support.

The grave was on a trampled hilltop
and the walk up to it was soft
on a carpet this time of deep slate-grey dust.
The crowd was many times greater
than anywhere before—
some three thousand it was agreed later
when estimates were compared.
The number of Europeans,
at most a hundred,
remained the same.

The sun was at noon,
and sweat trickled down our dusty skins.

A statement from the European king was read,
and translated.
The crowd kept pushing in on the ceremonial circle
and making it smaller.
A eulogy was delivered by the Governor-General,
and translated.
There was much talking in the crowd.
The Governor-General looked over at the source of the greatest
disturbance.
There was another speech.
The clergy must have done something about this time,
but for a while I could not see what was happening.
The soldiers reformed and pressed the circle back,
this time holding the barrels of one another's guns
to make a heavy chain.
The Europeans outside the ring
were supposed to get inside.

A chief began a speech.
There were some lightening exchanges and arguments
between several of the chiefs just before.
The voices swelled as he talked of the dead king,
of the desire of the women of the king's family
that there not be an autopsy.
The sound grew,
and with the voices
there was the wooden and iron rattling of lances,
and of arrows against bows,
and of baton and serpette.
Then he said he would name the new king
according to the instructions of the dead king,
and he named him
to the consternation of several of the chiefs,
to the astonishment of the informed Europeans
who had something less speedy and less traditional in mind
—something more like a joint-committee to choose among
the king's eighteen half-brothers—
to the gratification of the people,

the thin people in their rags
who had been aroused.
The official Europeans ratified the act
in a meeting with long tables, of course,
later in the day.

Here, much is left out:
The new king's triumphal return to the Residence,
the forgotten king beneath his dusty wreaths,
the opinions over beer,
the observations and laughter of a sophisticated clergy
in the commons of the College of Christ-Roi,
the official confirmation with the chiefs,
the words of political blessing:
"traditional," "unanimity of support," "forward,"
and "enthusiasm of the people,"
the public confirmation in a crowded hall,
and more.
But there are only two more important things to tell.
First, everyone there was happy,
though for a few happiness was the sum
of a complex accounting:
European joy at not having been chopped up
was expressed as self-congratulation
on the superior wisdom
of not resisting the course of events.
A few of the dead king's eighteen half-brothers
might have been less happy than most.
Second, the new king, or better, Mwami, needs describing
as he was that day.

The new Mwami was tall and quiet with the crowd,
and with a group of several Europeans
he was steady, soft in manner
and direct.
He said he was surprised,
that, as was traditional,
he had not known.
He said, "But I was just a sous-chef at Astrida!"

He said he was twenty-six and five centimeters shorter
than his predecessor's two meters seven.
He said he had been afraid of the people,
and he gestured with an imaginary lance
as if he knew how a lance was used.
He said his own mother,
now the Queen Mother, was alive,
and had been there when his name was announced.
He drank a glass of beer,
and he was docile for the photographer,
and he said he was tired.

I liked the new Mwami.
I gave him my U.S. silver dollar as a porte-bonheur.
Afterwards I looked at all my reasons and decided
the main reason was I wished him luck.
Because of his youth and his mildness,
I wished him not to be deformed;
and because of his country
which might win the title
of the Poorest Country in the World
among learned judges of demography
and economic chances;
and because of his people
who thought all kings died violently
and who, yet, wanted a king.

POSTSCRIPT AND BACKGROUND NOTES

A Fellowship of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and a Vassar College Faculty Fellowship supported anthropological field research from July 1959 to mid-June 1960 in Ruanda-Urundi, Belgian Central Africa. The work was carried out in Ruanda, for the most part in the District of Astrida. The purpose for which the fellowships were granted was the broad one of studying social and cultural change. While such a purpose was bound to be appropriate for any area or people of contemporary Africa, no one—United Nations' officials, Belgian administrators of the Trust Territory, Ruandese, social scientists who had written of the area—foresaw change of revolutionary character and violence. In any event, to state a desire to study a revolution would have been an impossible basis for a fellowship or visa application. But, once there and in the midst of it, it was equally impossible for an anthropologist interested in change to work at any problem that was not directly related to an understanding of what had happened and what was happening.

Le Roi Est Mort describes the opening event in what was to be the revolution. The death of the Mwami Mutara was the particular historical accident that began it, although the conflicting interests of the different groups in the population had existed for centuries, and the past half century of European contact had gradually affected the old power relationships in a way that enabled their reversal. Mutara died within a few weeks of my arrival in Ruanda. My fellow anthropologists will know best of all how uncertain are any interpretations during the first part of a new fieldwork undertaking. Some anthropologists have not even taken notes for several months, preferring to wait until they felt sufficiently knowledgeable in the new culture and sufficiently sure of the quality of communication they had with its members. What anthropologist, however, could ignore the death of a king? The title, *Le Roi Est Mort*, is the form of the announcement of the news to me. The words were unforgettable because of the shock I felt at being plunged into events I was poorly prepared to understand. I took notes on everything I saw and heard, and some of them were ludicrous in view of what happened later or what I later learned. For instance, I recall clicking off the barefoot and the shod on tally counters in my pocket while I was waiting outside the church during the funeral services for the king. What I should have been counting was the number of armed as against the number of unarmed men—for all I knew, most Ruandese men customarily carried a knobbed club, spear, or, at least, a

serpette or bill-hook. The narrative poem was an attempt to record the feel of these events as I experienced them. To me, now, it is misleading only in the concluding tone which suggests that everything will come out all right in a traditional world. What I did not know then was that I was in the heartland of royalists; that Nyanza was the Mwami's own district, whereas less than fifty kilometers to the north or to the south, in the district of my sojourn, loyalty to the king would be often mixed or in question.

Some specific background is necessary. The population of Ruanda (now about two and a half million) had been divided for centuries into three castes—the Tutsi aristocrats and rulers constituting about sixteen per cent of the population; the Hutu agriculturalists, about eighty-three per cent; and the Twa pygmoid hunters, potters, and courtiers, less than one per cent. The Tutsi dominated the Hutu and lived as a leisure class on the agricultural surplus and the services of the Hutu. Only the Tutsi owned cows, and a feudal relation prevailed in which a Hutu was granted the usufruct of one or more cows in return for his produce and services. The monarch and the administrators of his army and government were all Tutsis. The Hutu were vassals and taxpayers and were treated oppressively by the Tutsi according to well developed racist notions about Tutsi superiority and fitness to rule and Hutu inferiority and fitness to serve. The Twa were considered to be special wards and servants to the Mwami himself, were proverbial in their loyalty, and performed a series of special services for the court, ranging from choreography of the royal dance group to torture and execution. Europeans were late in penetrating Ruanda, and any serious influence they had on Ruandese social structure has been within the last generation. Much of it has been inadvertent and indirect—for instance, the building of a network of roads made it possible for a Hutu to escape his overlord.

While this account is far too brief and oversimplified, it serves to explain something of Ruanda's revolution. In 1959-1960 the Tutsi thought there was everything to gain and nothing to lose in a push to restore all their former power. The coup d'état in which they installed the new Mwami of their choice without the participation of the Hutu, the Belgian administrators, or the United Nations Trusteeship Council was their opening move, and one of their more peaceful moves. The Hutu majority showed that centuries of being dominated did not mean acceptance of their condition but rather justified its complete overthrow. They responded to Tutsi attempts to assert their power more aggressively and to intimidate them by jacqueries and incendiarism. The Belgians played a curious, aloof role; rather than being the rulers in a system of indirect rule, they were ruled by forces that assigned them the tasks of the policeman and magis-

trate for a critical and dissatisfied United Nations. Even the United Nations, in the persons of its Visiting Commission, became tainted by the revolution, for it was neither to its pleasure nor its credit that it made its rounds of Ruanda under heavy military guard. Events have since shown that 1959 was a revolutionary turning point. The Mwami has been in exile some time, and some of the most loyal of his Tutsi supporters doubt whether the monarchy could be restored even in a most limited constitutional form. Elections are to be held under UN supervision to confirm or deny the republic which the Hutu political parties have declared to exist. Whatever the political turmoil or the role of outsiders—Belgians, the United Nations, other Africans, other countries—what clearly emerges is that the traditional social order of Ruanda is gone, and that the fact, the measures, and the philosophy of Tutsi domination of a Hutu majority have all been overthrown.

Death and the Religious Philosophy of the Basongye

By ALAN P. MERRIAM

■ The recent surge of American interest in Africa has led to an ever-increasing flood of books, articles, newspaper accounts, and radio and television programs, all devoted to explanations of phenomena of African life. But the vast majority of these accounts has been centered upon political and economic events, and even in academic and professional circles emphasis has consistently been laid upon these and problems of social structure. This emphasis is not surprising for political and economic events in Africa are of direct concern to us all. The Congo crisis, events in South Africa, the troubles of the Portuguese in Angola, as well as the more peaceful transitions to independence in other parts of the continent, have had their effect upon the United Nations, the United States, and even individual citizens who are being called upon not only for economic and political assistance but for understanding of another way of life as well.

The political, economic, and social studies now so readily avail-

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able help immensely in this understanding, but when the picture is painted solely in these terms we find there is something missing. Although in political terms alone it is not difficult, for example, to explain the problems of the Congo in attaining its unification, the politics of the situation does not tell us the whole story. This is because a political explanation in itself does not usually probe and explain the sanctions and values behind the visible action which give to it the validity of rationality in the thinking of the Congolese.

It is these sanctions of belief that are most difficult to comprehend cross-culturally, for they are based upon principles which are deep-seated in the philosophy of the people concerned, and the philosophy itself does not necessarily accord with our own. Much has been written in the past about the so-called "prelogical mentality" of "primitive" people, but we have come to discount such views because they do not accord with what we have learned. We know now that the philosophies of other peoples are built up as logically as our own, but that—and this is crucial—the basic premises from which the philosophies stem may be different from ours and difficult for us to accept. The premises, then, are what we must seek if we are to understand other peoples, for it is here that we will find the foundations upon which belief and behavior are based.

Very recently the point of view has been growing that the basic values and sanctions of African culture are to be found most clearly expressed in the study of the humanities—in oral literature, music, the visual arts, dance, drama, philosophy, and religion. When the Umututsi in Ruanda says, "He who knows about the night is he who spent a sleepless night," he expresses a deep-seated principle of his culture that there is no substitute for experience; or when he says, "One pole will not start a house," he is commenting upon the social fact that a man must have a wife before he can truly establish a home. From song texts, from sculpture and painting, from dramatic expression, as in our own culture, come the direct expressions of basic motives and sanctions for living.

This is nowhere clearer than in religion where, through myths that explain the existence of the universe, through ritual and ceremony which assure the proper relationships to the universe and the beings that inhabit it, and through the knowledge of man's place in his total setting, all the facets of man's experience are underlined in

terms of his proper and improper behavior. Every religion embodies a system through which men attempt to control that part of the universe which does not consistently yield to secular technology; in doing so, men presuppose supernatural forces and powers which are related to and interested in men; and to communicate with these forces and powers there are men with special powers and abilities who serve as media between the human society and the supernatural world. Taken together, these parts provide men with a unified philosophy from which radiate the beliefs which activate the behavior of the people. Underlying the social, political, and economic, then, as well as the linguistic and humanistic behavior of any people is a philosophical system, and the understanding of that system can take us far toward the real understanding of the people concerned.

I should like to develop here one aspect of the ramifications of the philosophical system of the Bala sub-tribe of the Basongye people of the eastern Kasai province in the Republic of the Congo (the former Belgian Congo). The thesis is that because of the particular religious philosophy of the Bala, man himself has become the primary causal agent of death, and that the presence of this belief explains the need in this particular culture for a multiplicity of human death-dealing devices, including witchcraft, a complex magical system, and sorcery. Without an understanding of the basic principles of the religious philosophy, the apparently antagonistic behavior of the Bala people toward one another, and the belief in the efficacy of the death-dealing devices, is not explicable.

The Basongye have apparently been in their present location since the fifteenth century when they were the founders of the First Baluba Empire. Dispersed by the Arab slave wars in the 1880's, they regrouped themselves about 1900 into three major divisions—the so-called "pure" Basongye in the east, the Bekalebwe in the south, and the Bala in the northwest. The total Basongye population is about 150,000, while that of the Bala sub-tribe, with which my studies were concerned, is 7,149 by government figures for 1958.

The economic basis is agriculture, with manioc and maize the staple crops, supported by peanuts, yams, rice, various legumes, fruits, and other crops; cotton is grown as a cash crop. Although game is scarce in the area, there are hunters who gain their livelihood

in this manner, and fishing is an important occupation. Domesticated animals include goats, chickens, pigeons, and dogs. The economy is marked by systems of gift giving which provide a very important means of distribution of wealth.

The social structure is both patrilineal and bilateral; that is, in its important aspects it is organized around and traces from the male side, but at the same time an individual is related to all persons on both sides of his family and may not marry into the descent group of any persons to whom he is related. Residence after marriage is always on the land owned by the husband's family, bridewealth is a very important part of marriage, and women retain ties with their father's descent group.

The political system is based upon the division of the village into quarters each of which is headed by a leader who represents political and legal authority. Above this organization is a group of six political dignitaries, each with specific functions, who constitute the real legal authority in the village. Just beneath the six dignitaries in the hierarchy are four dignitaries-in-training, who do not appear as such in public but who take part in all consultations, thus preparing themselves as a cadre of trained personnel ready to step into vacancies as they may occur. Above the notables is the chief, who is the highest political and legal authority, and all lines of power lead ultimately to him. At the base of the political system, however, are the people, whose right to impose or depose any dignitary, including the chief, is absolute, working through a democratic council system.

Musical instruments include xylophone, drum, *ḳisaghshi*, rattle, double bell, and some others, but the musical system does not seem to be particularly complex. Folklore includes tales, myths, legends, proverbs, and tongue-twisters. Graphic arts are not practiced, but plastic arts are represented in the carving of fertility figures, of which at least five local styles can be distinguished. Weaving, dyeing, mat-making, pottery work, and forging are present to varying degrees, and a major source of income is derived from the making of raffia platters and baskets which are sold as much as 750 miles away in major cities of the Congo.

The language is Kisongye; it is typically Bantu (Niger Congo) and shows considerable relationship to languages around it, including Otetela, Chiluba, and even Kiswahili; it is a tonal language.

Most people in the villages speak at least one other language besides Kisongye, and men may speak as many as six different languages.

With this brief overview of the culture of the Bala in mind, we can now turn to a closer study of the religious organization and philosophy.

The list of Bala supernaturals is not extensive. At its head is Efile Mukulu, God, who created the world and everything in it through the agency of a culture hero, Mulopwe. No one has ever seen Efile Mukulu, and since creating the earth and man he has more or less retired to his unknown abode where he is cognizant of the actions of man but concerns himself only remotely with everyday behavior. Efile Mukulu is considered to exist in everything, and to be everything, and thus everything is a part of Efile Mukulu.

Opposed to Efile Mukulu is Kafilefile who is considered to be the personification of evil; in the past he often misled men into believing he was Efile Mukulu and was thus able to impart his evil notions. Finally, Kalombo is a sort of half-supernatural being who was created by Efile Mukulu but who claimed to have created himself. He, too, is placed in opposition to Efile Mukulu and plays the role of trickster, causing embarrassment for his creator and for the people. Kalombo eventually died, thus stressing his half-supernatural aspect, but his name retains a social function in moralizing tales told especially to children.

There exists but one other supernaturally created group of beings, the *mulungaeulu*, whose origin and actions are not precisely clear to the Bala. In general, the *mulungaeulu* are conceived as enormous witless spirits controlled by sorcerers; they wander through the bush and villages, causing death at the bidding of their masters. They are conceived to be white in color, generally in human form, but so tall that one cannot normally see the head; on coming face to face with this apparition, one is paralyzed.

There are no further spirits of the bush—fairies, elves, monsters, or other manifestations—and it is important to note that even the *mulungaeulu* are controlled by the magic powers of men.

Finally, there are the ancestral spirits. These are conceived to be ever-present in varying numbers; they appear to men in dreams and counsel a course of action; they may call for sacrifices of a chicken or, rarely, a goat; they are considered to be watchful over and interested in men, but their malignant actions are for the most part activated by men.

Every individual is considered to be composed of three parts, his body, his *kikudi*, which can be roughly translated as "soul," and his shadow. The *kikudi* and the shadow (*mweshieshi*) are inextricably linked together, except for the brief period between death and burial when the *kikudi* has departed but the shadow remains. *Kikudi* and shadow are of an entirely different nature from the body which serves only as housing, to be discarded when it is worn out. The body seems to have a separate consciousness which may be located in the head, while the consciousness of *kikudi* and its mate, the shadow, is probably in the heart. In any case, the body knows nothing which the *kikudi* does not know; on the other hand, the *kikudi* has certain knowledge which it does not share with the body.

The philosophy of the Bala religion is derived from four basic postulates. The first of these is transmigration of the *kikudi*. While there is some difference of opinion as to the exact details of this mechanism, the *kikudi* seems normally to return three times to earth in a human body, and a fourth time in the body of an animal before it goes to Efile Mukulu to remain indefinitely. Part of the knowledge, incidentally, which the *kikudi* withholds from the body concerns the current term—thus the body does not know on which term its *kikudi* is embarked, although the *kikudi* does.

The second postulate is a belief in *kwelampungulu*, which can be translated only roughly as "fatalism," for it contains elements both of fatalism and of predestination. When an individual is born, the entire course of his life is determined by Efile Mukulu who notes the details in a book (clearly a belief borrowed from outside the culture), and this predestination is carried to the ultimate extreme to include every detail of the actions of a human being. Fatalism

derives from predestination, and thus if an individual is faced with a leopard in the bush, he may run until exhausted, at which time he figuratively shrugs his shoulders and says to himself: "If the leopard is going to kill me, it will kill me; if it is not going to kill me, it will not kill me. It is *kwelampungulu*."

The third postulate is the belief that Efile Mukulu is not a death-causing agency. The Bala are divided in their belief as to the origin of death. Some hold that Efile Mukulu taught men how to cause death and then himself took no further part in it. Others believe that Efile Mukulu never intended that human beings should know about death; in this version, after Efile Mukulu had created man he turned his back, at which point Kafilefile took man aside and said to him, "If you want to know how to kill other people, I'll show you," and he did. The belief in this case is not of primary importance; what is vital is the concept of Efile Mukulu as a supernatural being who does not himself kill except in the rarest of cases. It should be made clear that Kafilefile does not kill either; in fact, he has almost disappeared from the world of men, although his evil influence continues to be seen. Both Mulopwe and Kalombo have disappeared from earth and play no part in death. The *mulungaeulu* can cause death, but their actions are controlled by human beings; and there are no other supernatural beings who can take part in death. The ancestral spirits can cause death through vengeful action, but this action, too, is activated and controlled by men. Finally, death from sheer old age and, to a certain extent, from accident is accepted by the Bala, but such events are considered to be rare.

This leads, then, to the fourth basic postulate which is the belief in the efficacy of magic, witches, and sorcerers, all of which play an extremely important part in Bala life. Taken together, the four postulates account clearly for the multiplicity of death-dealing devices which characterize the life of the Bala.

Given the fact, then, that supernatural beings do not cause death except when impelled by men and, indeed, that Efile Mukulu himself has eschewed any personal part in causing death, and given the fact that there simply does not exist a hierarchy of supernatural beings to whom death can be attributed, man has been forced to take the responsibility for death and to create the mechanisms whereby it is carried out. It is not meant, of course, that men have consciously

become murderers by direct physical violence, but rather that the total philosophy allows for death only through the agency of men acting through magical means. The philosophy contains all the necessary parts to make men's magical actions not only possible, but necessary. Death and the religious philosophy are interacting in that the former depends upon the latter, while the latter validates the means by which the former is believed to take place.

In order to establish this hypothesis, it must be demonstrated that there is in fact an elaboration of mechanisms used by men to cause death, and while it is not possible to write in great detail, at least a general view can be given. I should like to use the *bandoshi*, or witches, as an example.

Bandoshi can be separated from sorcerers on the basis of the fact that they are necessarily malignant people whose delight comes in causing trouble for others; sorcerers, or *banganga*, on the other hand, control either beneficial or malignant magic and, in addition, serve as medical doctors for the society.

One can become an *ndoshi* either against his knowledge and will or by design. In the former case, one's mother is an *ndoshi* and wishes her offspring to follow in her footsteps; she teaches the child various manipulations and also gives him a special potion to drink, which fixes the transformation. The second means of becoming an *ndoshi* involves consultation with a sorcerer and the voluntary drinking of the magic potion. However, in either case, the death of someone in the new *ndoshi's* family is involved, for in order to complete the change, either the mother or the sorcerer must kill a family member designated by the neophyte *ndoshi*. Thus, one cannot become an *ndoshi* unless a member of his family dies and the cause of death is attributed to the neophyte.

There are three types of *bandoshi*; first, a type which contents itself merely with appearing as a remarkably bright light which paralyzes the victim. The *ndoshi* violently twists the neck of its victim, who remains ill for a period of a month or more as a result. The second type is that which maliciously sports itself in the fields, destroying crops and defecating. The third type is that which can and does kill. One of the ways that killing can be accomplished by an *ndoshi* is through capturing the breath of his victim; this he seizes, wraps up in a piece of cloth, and tucks under his belt so that it cannot

be seen. The family assumes that the victim is dead and has the body to prove it, though in reality by seizing the breath the *ndoshi* has simply captured the person's *kikudi*, or spirit. After the body has been buried, the *ndoshi* creates a violent rainstorm at night to cover his actions, goes to the cemetery, calls the body out of the grave, and puts *kikudi* and body back together again. He has now created a being called a *kiswikiswiki* which is normal in physical form but about the size of a baby and invisible to all except the *ndoshi*. The *kiswikiswiki* is then taken to the *ndoshi's* house where it is put in a calabash suspended from the ceiling and supplied with bananas for food. When the funerary rites have been concluded and the loss has been made less sharp by time, the *ndoshi* takes the *kiswikiswiki* to the chief who, it is assumed, will also inevitably be an *ndoshi*; the chief buys it for a price paid in palm oil, salt, and raffia cloths. The *kiswikiswiki* is possessed of the special ability to foretell the future, and its main task in relation to the chief is to warn him when he is in danger. If it is a "good" *kiswikiswiki* and performs its task well, it can eventually demand its freedom and the chief cannot refuse.

At this point, the *kiswikiswiki* normally becomes a *kikudi* again, but the cycle is not yet finished. Since the body to which this *kikudi* is attached has been killed, the *kikudi* seeks revenge on its tormentor. This involves its return to Efile Mukulu where it requests to be transformed into a *mukishi*, which is a vengeful spirit; in this form it returns to earth and, working through a member of the family, kills the person who originally killed its body. The *mukishi* then returns to Efile Mukulu to report on what it has done, and, since its action is considered legitimate, it is returned to the form of a *kikudi* and eventually is reborn on earth.

This is, of course, a simplified version of the *ndoshi-kiswikiswiki-kikudi-mukishi-kikudi* chain of events, but what I wish to point out is that in the process of the various transformations, at least three deaths, at a very minimum, have been accounted for, and all through human agency.

Moreover, the Bala recognize clearly that once begun on a career of *ndoshi*-ism, there is a great temptation to expand one's activities. Thus one may start as a simple malevolent *ndoshi* who destroys fields; this causes the death of some member of the family, for one cannot become an *ndoshi* unless he delivers a victim to his teacher.

But such an *ndoshi* is often so charmed with his evil-doing that he wishes to become the type of *ndoshi* that kills; in order to make the change he must deliver about six further members of his family to death. And finally, utterly delighted with his increased powers, for he is an inherently evil person, he may well wish to become a sorcerer with the power to kill, and this transformation in turn demands the deliverance of at least ten members of his family to death.

The means by which such deaths take place are numerous and, outside of the deaths caused by *mukishi* and by *mulungaeulu* which are supernatural, though activated by humans, derive from magical means. There are several great classes of magic, of which two are of primary importance here: these are *bakidyamuchi* and *bwanga*. The distinction between these major types is two-fold: in the first place *bakidyamuchi* is primarily actional, that is, involving action that some person initiated and takes against others; while *bwanga* is primarily protectional, that is, consisting principally in countering actional magic. The second distinction is that malignant intent is always involved in *bakidyamuchi*, while *bwanga* counters this malignant intent and, where it is somewhat actional itself, works toward good rather than evil.

Within *bakidyamuchi*, there are three sub-divisions, the first of which is all the magic concerned with the *bandoshi* whether it is or is not meant to kill. The second subdivision is *masende*, which can be defined as "magic used to kill someone," and it in turn is divided into numerous subclasses such as killing by means of lightning, contagious magic, spreading a certain ash across the doorway of the victim, and so forth. The third subdivision of *bakidyamuchi* is *buchi*, or magic used to discomfit others without killing. Thus within the single broad class of magic practice fall all the malignant means of causing death and discomfort.

On the other hand, the presence of *bwanga* makes it possible to counteract malignant magic, and this is accomplished through innumerable means. The most important of these is the entire subclass, *bwanga bwa kwiikela*, which deals directly with defenses against aggressive magical intentions of others.

Finally, some mention must be made of the *banganga* themselves through whose agency most magic operates. The *nganga* is a specialist in magic, which he uses both for good and evil, and the

individual who wishes to use magic pays a fee to the sorcerer who activates the magic either by teaching the client what to do or by doing it himself. The ordinary person cannot do magic and must engage the *nganga*, who is not only a magic specialist, but who works in medical remedies and controls *mulungaeulu* and, sometimes, *kikudi* as well.

All these are but brief descriptions of the workings of the religious philosophy in the practical matter of death, but they suffice to indicate the outline of Bala practice. The philosophy itself, then, sets out certain conditions under which the religious side of the society is organized and works; in the matter of death, it effectively removes as motivating agents of death almost all the supernatural sector, leaving the causes of death to human initiation. The principles which are derived are explanatory in themselves, and completely so, for since magic practice is secret, any death is explicable by reason of magic. In other words, the system explains all deaths because, conversely, all deaths are explicable through the system. Indeed, unless other factors are evident to the population—such as the death of a very old person whose *kikudi* simply "gets tired"—every death must be investigated by magic practitioners who determine the specific cause and the culprit. The philosophy provides the most important explanation of death, and because it does so, death is explicable only in its terms.

I have not tried to explain the human necessity for the philosophy and the system which its supports. This calls for wider speculations than are necessary here; for our purposes, the system itself is the crux of the matter.

Experience has shown us that religious philosophies and beliefs are very persistent aspects of culture in the face of change, and this seems to be true, as well, of the Bala system. Although the Belgian mission in the area claimed a total of forty-two converts out of a population of approximately two hundred and sixty people in the village in which I lived in 1959-60, there is no evidence to suggest that the conversions were anything but superficial. Within the village, religious life was being lived under the traditional system, and those precepts of Christianity which were accepted were reinterpreted to conform with the basic religious philosophy.

But the Bala had been subjected to a variety of outside influences, both from other tribes in the area and from the Western world, and certain changes had already taken place. Thus in the Belgian administration center twenty-five miles from the village in which I worked, a hospital had been established for some time, staffed by a doctor and nurses of a Belgian religious order. The hospital was crowded with patients, and the doctor overworked. The Bala accepted the practice of Western medicine and were anxious to take advantage of its presence. But the religious beliefs of the traditional system were only slightly altered. The causes of illness remain the same; a death must still be investigated by the *nganga* to determine its cause; a cure in the hospital is interpreted in traditional terms. A death resulting, for example, from an operation, is interpreted as indicating that the magic power arrayed against the patient was greater than that of the doctor. The hospital and the doctor, in short, are fitted into the traditional system, and without difficulty, for illness and success or lack of success in curing it may be and are explained in terms of traditional belief; bacteria or operational shock are not needed. Nor does one need to understand the premises from which the doctor works to judge his successes or failures; the Bala system itself provides these equally well.

Although it has not been my primary purpose here to relate the religious systems as it affects the causes of death to the wider cultural system, I have already touched upon some of its ramifications. The expectation, for example, that a chief is an *ndoshi* makes certain of his actions and certain of the attitudes of the people toward him explicable. The economic life of the Bala can be deeply affected by magical practices as, for example, when a malevolent *ndoshi* destroys the crops in the fields. Such examples could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

The religious system, then, provides us with a knowledge of deep-lying values, sanctions, and attitudes that go a long way toward clarifying the behavior of the Bala. I would not suggest that such clarification cannot be reached through any other means, but I would emphasize that our understanding of other people depends to a considerable degree upon our understanding of the basic premises upon which their culture is based, and that these premises are often most clearly enunciated in the humanistic aspects of their culture.

Africa: Mother and Muse

By STANLEY L. FISCHER

■ "Mother Africa," prays the hero of a recent novel by an African writer, "Oh, Mother Africa, make me strong for the work I must do. Don't forget me in the many you nurse. I would make you great. I would have the world respect you and your children. I would have the sun of freedom shine over you once more." This is a prayer which suggests the complex relationship to their mother which the sons of Africa are feeling—a kind of creative dependence in which the matriarch is felt as ur-source of sustenance in the tasks which she herself, struggling through a maze of cultural confusion, demands. This complex relationship is not always equally well understood, nor explored with equal sensitivity, by all the young Africans who feel themselves caught up in it, but, in any case, there is no "free act" for them: every act is weighted with an enormous symbolism. With the Negroes in our own South, so apparently casual a decision as which seat one takes on a bus has willy-nilly its significance as symbol, because by such acts dignity is gained or given up; imagine a whole life which is thus symbolic and, it would seem, one has begun to open a way into the growing body of literature which is being produced today by native African writers. It is a literature which may best be appreciated if one remembers always its primary function as dramatic gesture.

In the same novel from which we have already quoted, *A Wreath for Udomo* by Peter Abrahams (a South African now living

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in Jamaica), Udomo is moved by talk of the pleasures of art to suggest a new poetry of his own: ". . . For me the freedom of my people and the dream of that freedom is as beautiful [as any poetry]. It's my people. . . . That is my poetry." Udomo's conception of politics as artistic is not essentially different from that of Kisimi Kamarra in *The African* (William Conton, Gambian), nor are these two essentially different from what we see autobiographically in *Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwame Nkrumah*. The implication of Mr. Nkrumah's title is that the growth to power of the man is also the growth to power of the state. Politics is here not the maintenance of the status quo; it is a creative process by which the nation and its values are made by the leader, with freedom being the end product. On the other hand, the artist can easily become politician when, in a situation in which every act has its immediate symbolic value, he enacts through a fictional hero (who may resemble ever so closely the autobiographical hero) the drama of the political or cultural struggle.

This close relationship between "real" and "symbolic" in which the two become essentially the same is not limited to novels in which the subject is explicitly political, although it is perhaps most striking in these. *Nommo*, the magical power of the word by which language is felt to have real efficient power, is universal. Just as politics can be poetry, so can a style of life. In Abrahams' autobiography, *Tell Freedom* (which is difficult to distinguish in style from his novel), Mad Nondi, so named because he refused to take on the attitudes required by the regularity of industrialization, leaves a job which he cannot stand because of the fears it demands and goes off to find the setting sun: "And your people?" asks young Abrahams. "'I am my people.' . . . He saluted, smiled, and walked briskly in the direction of the setting sun. I stood watching him. Perhaps he would turn. . . . But he did not turn. Good-bye, Nondi! Poetry was dressed in filth and nobody recognized her." Here, too, the converse would seem to be worth considering: that poetic or fictional style can be the projection of a wished-for, or at least tempting, life style.

Thus all of the novels of contemporary Africa seem to come into significant relation to the struggle of the Africans peoples for what they see as their proper role in the world. The struggle is too pervasive, the symbolic value of all acts too apparent for there to be

any possible neutral ground. The new art of Africa is both representative and efficient; the novels we shall look at both show us the Africa that is being made or envisioned and at the same time help that process of realization along. Viewed in this way, the new African novels (the restriction is only because that is what this review is about) can be invaluable to us as we attempt to understand the struggle which produced them. Now that we are aware of Africa's consciousness of herself, we can no longer think of the problem as one of giving our own values to the Africans. They are not matter to be formed by our Christian-industrial values. Too much of that has been done already, as some of our novels will show. Some Africans, in fact, are struggling with problems of tradition and change in ways which might be of assistance in our own attempts to deal with the same problems at home. The essential thing is for us to grasp in their full complexity the problems of cultural transition as the Africans who are most intimately and intelligently involved in making the shift see them.

The novels which I have chosen to look at range themselves rather naturally along a spectrum of attitudes to the old and the new and their relation to each other. The progress, though irregular, will be toward increasing complexity and richness of both poetic structures and the problems they encounter. Suppose we start with something written by a man whose perspective as a European is different from that of the rest of our writers. I refer to Alan Paton. In *Cry the Beloved Country*, a generally very rich and beautiful handling of its material, there is an earnest but simplistic statement of our problem:

> The old tribal system was, for all its violence and savagery, for all its superstition and witchcraft, a moral system. Our natives today produce criminals and prostitutes and drunkards, not because it is their nature to do so, but because their simple system of order and tradition and convention has been destroyed. It was destroyed by the impact of our own civilization. Our civilization has therefore an inescapable duty to set up another system of order and tradition and convention.

This suggests a group of very important questions: Can we assume that the traditional system has been destroyed? How would it be possible to "set up" another system of "order and tradition and convention"? If this were somehow technically possible, could it ever

be an acceptable system to those for whom it was set up? Where would it come from? Is it like a steel mill which can be fabricated and shipped? Or will we have to come at last to realize the complexity of this precious commodity, values, which like fine wine may not travel well? It is questions like these on which Africans are taking stands in their own literature, and questions like these which are making that literature what it so distinctively is.

Udomo, following a pattern typical for promising African youth, goes to England (it could, with minor alterations in attitude, just as well be France or the United States or the Soviet Union) for an education and there joins a group of his compatriots whose dream and life are the independence of their country. He is carried to leadership of his party by an impassioned speech in which he harrangues a mixed council on African affairs. The speech is all frustration seeking an outlet, the frustration, if one looks to Abrahams' autobiography, of years of RESERVED FOR EUROPEANS ONLY:

> "There is too much blood on your hands for you to be concerned about a few more dead blacks!" He paused and listened to the utter silence of the room. His voice rose. His lips twisted. . . . "Well, we will not forget! But next time— But next time—!" He raised his right, fisted arm high above his head, aware of the faces turned to him, aware of the great silence in the hall, aware, too, now, of the violent trembling of his body in the great silence. Then he sat down suddenly, utterly spent.

It is this explosive violence, this willingness to sacrifice himself, this messianic awareness of his own personal power, which Udomo uses, once back in Africa, to lead his people to independence. Triumph for the Africa Freedom Party comes when Udomo brings on his own imprisonment by writing inflammatory articles, knowing that the dramatic value of his gesture will rally the party's membership like nothing else. From the window of his cell he looks out on a mass

torch-light meeting to rally support for his party, and with Machiavellian sureness of the right thing to do and say, sends out one of his sympathizers: "Go to the people and tell them I wept. Say 'Udomo stood at his prison window and held the bars and looked out. And then he saw the flames and knew they were taking the oath. And then Udomo wept.' Tell them that. Go now, man!" And then, "There was a new brightness in his eyes. This little cell, this prison, was the gateway to freedom." Udomo's acute consciousness of the importance of the creative gesture and fine sensitivity to the role of the leader as a focus of power for change is set against, or perhaps caused by, a deep hatred of both European domination and tribal influence. For Udomo and his like, tribalism is a "ritual code of fear and authority" which robs man of his individuality. It is a force to be used for the achievement of personal liberty but never a potential source of values to be developed in new ways. Udomo is finally slain by his own bodyguards who ironically don tribal garments and work themselves into a murderous frenzy by listening to the ancient drums demanding the death of the leader who has led too boldly away from the past. This resurgence of the tribal spirit to reject his leadership is seen by Udomo as only a temporary danger; he feels that his people have come too far ever to fall back into the old ways. He thus becomes a scapegoat to carry off the waning power of the tribal spirit, and the messianic role is carried to its completion. However, one wonders if the conception of tribalism as a sin of which the land must be purged is not in its own way just as simplistic as the notion that the force of tradition has been destroyed. Too great a demand is made on the hero; he stands between two cultural systems and, while rejecting both, attempts to build on a base of the old a new of which he is disdainful. Poetically, then, Udomo's superheroism seems to conceal a lack of insight.

William Conton's novel, *The African*, is the story of *Tell Freedom* plus *A Wreath for Udomo* all over again, except that Kisimi Kamarra is less angry and messianic and more sensitive and thoughtful than Udomo. He is less a hero, less a focus of dramatic and symbolic power, but rather moves toward a richer understanding of the cultural complex in which the leader must act. And because Africa emerges in this novel as a source of real values for the building of a new life, the need for a messianic hero is diminished. As the

young Kamarra prepares to leave for his European adventure, he sees his life as a dilemma: he senses the alienation which his knowledge will bring and yet realizes that the choice to go on has already been irrevocably made. Here, writ small, is the movement away from the old which Udomo had felt was the only right one for Africa, and here too (as nostalgia now, and so considerably less malignant in appearance) is the spirit of tribal resurgence. Yet the dilemma is resolved not through Western "knowledge" but through African "wisdom": Kisimi is, his father tells him, like one climbing a tall palm tree with many, both living and dead, watching his progress; if he reached the top simply to gorge himself, he would surely be cursed and fall to his death, but if he shared the fruits with his people, he would be blessed. Here there is not rejection of what is African (now more broadly conceived than was the tribal for Udomo) but a realization that "knowledge" can and must fit into the context of "wisdom" and that "wisdom" has its African shape. But when Kisimi returns to Africa he finds the "wisdom" largely destroyed:

> By setting out on a deliberate policy of abandoning almost abruptly a way of life which our forebearers had pursued contentedly for many centuries, and adopting that of a distant northern people, we had reached a point where we were finding it increasingly difficult to keep a foothold on anything. We were in danger of losing our sense of direction, of purpose, of faith in ourselves.

Into the vacuum left by the destruction of the native sense of tribal brotherhood and the charity it implied, Kisimi sees rushing "the European's exaggerated individualism, his constant exalting of the single human being, at the polls, in the classroom, and in the sight of God." This, quite clearly, is the attitude which Udomo epitomizes, even in his disdain for what is European; it is an attitude which Conton would have Kamarra overcome. Whether the struggle and ultimate victory are dramatically valid (and therefore symbolically effective) is not clear. Kamarra, who has fallen into the same materialistic-individualistic slough as his countrymen, is jolted into repentance and reformation by a picture he sees in a newspaper. It is of a South African Negro woman being roughed up by white police at a demonstration against forced relocation. The woman is obviously pregnant, and the caption reads, "What Sort of Future Can This Woman Expect?" The brutality of the pun (along with another incident in which a drunken native mistakes a Hollywood

movie for the real thing and rushes out of the theater to cry murder in the streets) shocks Kamarra into the realization that Africa must stop being maltreated and fooled, must become herself again before the future will be anything but a mockery of values. Kisimi's response is symbolically interesting in that it is not based upon individual introspection, is not at all narcissistic as so many important decisions in our own contemporary fiction are, but is rather an act which consciously answers the plea of Mother Africa. Yet Kisimi's decision (he becomes a political leader of Udomo's kind) leads him irrevocably back in the direction of the exaltation of the individual which he had earlier found so difficult to reconcile with the traditional African ways as he understood them. This, then, is the real dilemma of the book: what may in reality be the only workable solution to the immediate problem in Africa involves in its fictional embodiment (in which past and future take on aesthetic presence) a subtle irony. This is perhaps the basic value of fiction of the kind Africans are writing today: while the practical solution to problems is tightly bound to the existent and always problematic reality, fiction can project an ideal by making its own lucid existence. In the light of this kind of clarity, Kisimi's growing love and real admiration for his African wives, his discovery "that I could still lose myself ecstatically in an art form [the dance] so uncompromisingly African," and a great surge of forgiveness for a white South African who had earlier brutally killed a white girl whom Kisimi loved (and who loved him)—even these are not sufficient answer to the aesthetic and practical problems the book itself perceptively suggests.

Political novels, however, are not the only ones in which the search for ways out of the dilemma goes on; in fact, the search may well be a more perceptive one when the obvious directions of industrialization and Western political traditions seem less clearly open. Where confusion at best and sheer negation at worst are felt strongly as determinants in a fictional action, and where a heroic individual focus of power is not seen to be possible *because* of the confusion (instead of possible in spite of it), other ways must be sought out. Such is the predicament of Amusa Sango, jazz musician and crime reporter for the West African *Sensation*. Amusa moves through the world of the Nigerian Cyprian Ekwensi's *People of the City*, seeking some hint that personal realization is possible. For much of the novel, Amusa is without a home, and the sense of frenetic movement one

gets from this lack of a center of focus adds to the urgency of the larger quest. Crisscrossing Amusa's nervous path are the other people in the city. At one extreme there is Bayo, hopelessly lost, "the over-draped zoot that came down to his knees, his hair correctly permed, sometimes scented . . . narrow trousers with ten-inch ankles, the platformed shoes," the zebra shirt under his coat, trying vainly to find identity in a unstable world of jazz, beer, and the girls of the city. On the side of hope there is Beatrice whom Amusa meets at the funeral of the great African nationalist De Periera ("our own Ghandi"). Beatrice lives in "no rent-grabbing house but a real home," where the traditional kola nut is served (instead of cigarettes and beer); her father believes in the past: "It is when you know the past that you can appreciate the present"; her mother wears a graceful African dress. For Amusa, Beatrice and her famliy are a link with the stability of a traditional set of values. For us, they are perhaps a very naive presentation of something we feel should be more complex; but then, this is a simple novel—simple and yet real. In a thoroughly comic ending, Beatrice and Amusa set off to build "a new life, a new place of opportunity developing along the lines of freedom of expression, encouragement of talent (music especially)." They are going away to another city to "do something, become something," and in this sense the novel honors the new, the young in Africa; but the challenge is seen as Beatrice's father with his traditional dignity and pride, so that the new is projected against a background of the old and yet the old is revitalized in the new.

When this balance between old and new is upset in favor of the old (as we have seen it upset in favor of the new by Abrahams and Conton) two poetic directions seem to be open—tragedy and fantasy. In *Things Fall Apart,* Chinua Achebe explores very perceptively the tragic implications of impossible (even though noble) allegiance to the old. Achebe himself sees clearly, but Okonkwo (his anti-hero if we compare him with Udomo and Kamarra) does not and cannot, and tragedy is the form which his story must take. Okonkwo is a strong man who draws his strength from a complete faith in his tribal standards of behavior; he can accept as valuable only what fits the norms to which he is committed. Both his father and his son seem to him worthless men because neither has the vigor or oneness with the cultural purpose to be important in the tribe. The different

fates, however, of the grandfather and the son are symbolic of the novel's direction. Early in the story, the grandfather, afflicted with a disease which makes him unfit to be buried in the earth, is taken into the bush to die; he takes his cherished flute (the symbol of his spiritual unfitness) with him. The grandson, repelled by Okonkwo's participation in the "necessary" ritual murder of a young hostage from a neighboring tribe who had during his captivity lived in Okonkwo's house and become his son's dear friend, becomes a Christian in the newly-established missionary church, thus finding in a new culture an acceptance which had been denied his grandfather when the tribal culture was still the only possibility. But if the new culture is a haven for misfits in the old, it is also a threat to the very being of the old. When a tribal god is treated sacriligiously by a Christian and the men of the tribe can no longer summon the strength of will to do battle against the encroaching values, Okonkwo commits suicide because with the death of the tribal spirit his own life has lost its basis. While it is necessary to see the tragic qualities of Okonkwo, it is also possible to see that his story is not a tragedy in the fullest sense. Okonkwo is much more like Shakespeare's Brutus than like Macbeth or Hamlet. The distinction seems to turn on the relationship of the character to his situation and the way in which the pitiful and the fearful are finally transcended. In their very passion, the greatest tragic heroes seem to discover a self which is integral and inviolate, and in their discovery to be set above the passion to which they were subjected. The fate of Okonkwo (much more even than the fate of Brutus) seems to be the recognition that there is no self apart from the situation in which he is involved. So far, then, as the demands of cultural change are seen through a character like Okonkwo, we are faced with an aesthetic and symbolic dead-end which, while perhaps necessary to record, cannot offer much hope and sustenance for the struggle at hand. Yet, the aesthetic impact of Okonkwo's end bears its insistent, if negative, symbolic significance. The strong qualities in the African culture, qualities which, like Okonkwo, have such a definite character of their own that compromise is impossible, can be wiped out if their cultural basis is destroyed. Then the more adaptable qualities can be taken up into a new civilization imposed (or at least borrowed) from without. But if the story of Okonkwo is to make any contribution

to our understanding of Africa's problems, our feelings at his death must not be ignored. The whole world will lose if such strength is lost in the cultural shuffle.

The assimilation of Western cultural traits into an African culture which undergoes no significant change has also had its fictional expression; but this expression takes the form of fantasy or allegory, thus belying its abstraction from the situation which Africa today faces. This is not to say that such fiction is inferior to what we have been considering. In fact, in *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* (a prime example of the fantastic in literature) by Amos Tutuola (Nigerian), all is aesthetic harmony; form and content are perfectly commensurate. Artists like Abrahams and Conton, who use what seems to be a basically Western form in which the motivation and probability of the action are primarily dependent on the character and power of the hero, suffer a certain malaise in attempting to shape in such a manner a real content which is as yet recalcitrant to their treatment of it. In the Tutuola novel (or tale, for it is not a novel in our sense of the word), the palm-wine drinkard (a young man with a Gargantuan thirst for palm-wine who goes off to the Deads' Town to search for his expert tapster who has died) does not actively shape his environment (although with the help of powerful jujus he gains a certain amount of control, the spirits willing) but must rather react to the strong spirit forces which people his universe. The light of this spirit-filled universe touches with the color of fantasy everything on which it falls. By means of juju given him by the "Water Spirit woman," the drinkard becomes "like an aeroplane." Time and distance measurement, arts so dear to us, become almost ridiculous when they are applied to the topography of the Deads' Town: "But as we were looking at the town from a long distance, we thought that we could reach it the same day, but not at all, we travelled for 6 more days, because as we nearly reached there, it would still seem to be very far away to us or as if it was running away from us." Our cherished economic logic suffers equally: A "debit collector" who has never failed in his job is trying to collect a one pound debt when suddenly the debtor stabs himself and dies:

> But when the debit-collector saw the debitor died, he thought within himself that he had never failed to collect any debit from any debitor in this world since he had started the work and he (collector) said that if he

> could not collect the one pound from him (debitor) in this world, he (collector) would collect it in heaven. So he (collector) also pulled out a jack-knife from his pocket and stabbed himself as well, and he fell down and died there.

Not only the logic of finance, but even the logic of subject and object is called into question by the syntax of the Deads' Town. Most "unearthly" perhaps is Tutuola's strong sense of the possibility that the Spirits can easily turn to their own use the things which we humans tend to think of as peculiarly our property: the drinkard and his wife are on their way to Unreturnable Heaven's Town when they suddenly have the feeling that someone is watching them. As they look around, their attention is drawn to a giant white tree and, "As we were about forty yards away from it, there we noticed that somebody peeped out and was focusing us as if a photographer was focusing somebody." It turns out, however, not to be some cameraman looking for sensational photos, but the Faithful Mother who helps people. Tutuola's tale thus draws on a dimension of tribal, almost archetypal, experience to find a stable (if not always from a human point of view completely understandable) body of traditional beliefs which have a greater permanence and reality, at least so far as most Africans are concerned, than the trivia of our invading culture which they so easily assimilate and turn to their own uses. The tale, then, is fantasy, yet in the utopian fashion sets a kind of ideal by which the real may be measured.

Camara Laye (French Guinea; the only of our writers who does not write in English, his novel being translated from the French) explores another dimension of the fantastic as he uses the techniques of Franz Kafka to portray allegorically the outrageous confusion into which man is thrown as he struggles to make the great leap of cultural transition. This time, however, the main character in the novel is white, not black—a white man seeking entrance into the mysterious culture of Africa rather than a black man who must try to cope with our mysterious culture. Thus the unreality of the novel's theme (with "unreality" being seen now as a characteristic of allegory and defined relative to the first few novels we've looked at) frees it from the demands of practical affairs and allows it to view the problems of cultural transition not primarily as problems of "art" (as was the case in *A Wreath for Udomo*) but rather as prob-

lems of "love." Like K., Clarence seeks some role, no matter how small, by which he can maintain his human dignity in a context from which he is alienated by its incomprehensibility. In the North, he just glimpses the gold-laden king of all the blacks (whence, with a symbolic dimension added, the title: *The Radiance of the King*) and decides to beg him for some small place in His retinue. But Clarence has not the strength of will to struggle through the enormous crowds which surround the King and he is finally obliged to undertake a journey to the South in the hope that the King may be more accessible there. The journey is an allegorical stripping away of all Clarence's "civilization" until, in a jungle-circled village far to the South, he discovers his role: breeder to the old chief's harem. Disgust and discovery mingle, and there is a grotesque comedy in Clarence's ultimate refusal to wear clothes even at the behest of his native hosts. But then, in the radiant presence of the King at last, this man who by his own persistent standards has become an animal, learns that "It was this fire that sent its tongue of flame into his limbs, and this radiance that blazed upon him. It was this love that enveloped him." This solution, if such it can be called in any practical sense, treats problems of cultural transition ultimately in the mystical language of love. Perhaps, since we are here interested in make-believe things rather than in the realities about which they pretend to be, it is justifiable to pursue the mystery a little further.

The long narrative *Blanket Boy* (told to Peter Lanham by the Basuto chieftain Mopeli-Paulus) is a kind of picaresque tale in which an individual is driven through the whole gamut of transitional African experiences by the great cultural tides over which he has little control. His role is not the "heroic" one; he has the power neither to transcend nor to remake his situation. He is allowed no escape into fantasy. There is no way for him but to try to understand the cultural dilemma and the absurd demands it makes upon him and to find his importance in the teeth of the absurdity. Awareness begins when Monare is forced by the tribal ethic to participate in the ritual murder of his dearest friend (a man whom he'd met while working in Johannesburg). He is not yet free to be compassionate, but from this misfortune he perceives what the demands upon him are: "... that the Basotho people were forced to live in two worlds—the tribal world, ruled by the witch doctors, the chiefs and by cus-

toms; and the white man's world governed by the white man's law." And once the two worlds are recognized as equally present and insistent, a real solution to the cultural dilemma becomes possible. Monare's role is to suffer and to learn, and as his passion becomes *com*passion, he attains dignity. Without shame, "homemade Kaffir beer" can be appreciated as better than the white man's strong liquor—better in itself and not because it is African. Without shame, the African can use for his own purposes what the white man gives—even if it's a left-over:

> Monare-Dost-Ghulaim was roughly awakened by a hard blow on his nose; he opened his eyes to find, lying on his chest, a half-chewed mealie. As his eyes opened wider in surprise, he saw—flying over the bushes which hid him from the road—paper packets which, as they touched the ground, spilled out meat and bread.

Monare picks up the food, eats it, and thanks his current god for the favor; imagine what Udomo's reaction would have to be if he were struck on the nose by a "half-chewed mealie" thrown out of a car by whites. As Monare's compassion grows into the ruling principle of his life, as he responds instinctively and through love to the absurdity of his situation, there emerges in him a capacity for assimilating disparate experiences which gives one hope that in time the great dilemma may be solved. Monare's story not only has, but is, a message:

> Those that there is love between, shall never really be put asunder—not though the flesh divide them. Not though the seas separate them, not though colour and religion segregate them. For they are one in spirit, and at the end, shall be reunited.

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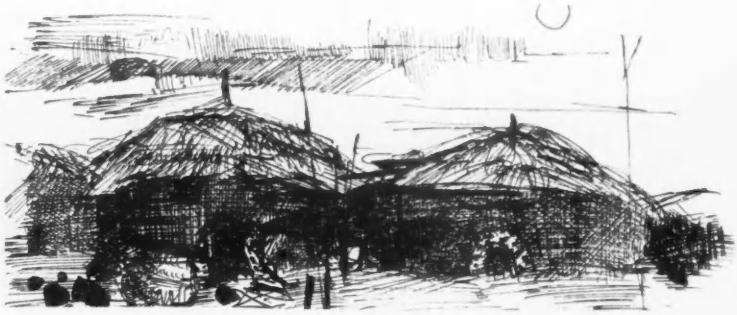

The Appeal of Revolution: The Liberal's Quandary

By JOHN H. BUNZEL

■ As soon as the liberals moved to the front of the political stage in Washington in January 1961, it was to be expected that they would raise their voices in support of the new administration as it began to usher in the "new frontier." However, in spite of their many pronouncements on a wide assortment of problems, it has become inescapably clear that American liberalism today does not command the same feeling of confidence or optimism of outlook which set the tone for another generation. The crisis of present-day liberalism has become a serious matter to those who have counted on its principles and spirit to help create a world that seems too often to be lacking in both. It is not necessary to claim that liberalism is bankrupt, although it seems clear that much of the successful liberal program of the past twenty-five years has drawn heavily on its political account. The more important contention is that the state of liberalism's resources today is a matter that needs careful examination, not in the over-worked context of simply doing verbal battle with conservatives but in an attempt to confront the American liberal tradition with the meaning and implications of a world undergoing a variety of revolutions.

The New York *Times* recently carried an account of the emotion being aroused in the burgeoning nations of Africa, an emotion

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sweeping dozens of new lands that once slept in the sun, an emotion which has become one of the most important political and economic problems for all the Western nations. The "revolution of rising expectations" is well under way, and the urgent problem for the West—and especially for the United States—is how it can make itself a part of this revolution and identify itself unmistakably with the stirrings and demands of millions of people who are getting off their knees and for the first time standing erect. "Isn't this really what we want and what we are supposed to stand for?" asked a young American diplomat in a West African capital. "Why should we be afraid of it? Why can't we help it and shape it instead of biting our fingernails?" In his own eloquent way he was expressing what has come to be a regular appeal of liberals who wish to counteract the ideological and political offensive of the Soviet Union and Communist China as they attempt to gain a foothold in every corner of the globe. America, we are repeatedly told, was itself born out of revolution. No nation anywhere has a better understanding of what it means to throw off an oppressor and set its own house in order.

William O. Douglas, Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court, is only the latest to declare in ringing terms that America's revolutionary heritage gives this nation a special reason to encourage and support revolution in the twentieth century. In an article in the *Saturday Review* of June 10, 1961, Justice Douglas begins with the statement: "We Americans were born in revolution." He then quotes the familiar passages in the Declaration of Independence—those on self-evident truths, inalienable rights, and the right of the people to alter or abolish their government if it subverts these rights—to state the meaning of our national creed. Abraham Lincoln is invoked, since he referred to the document as the "immortal emblem of humanity" which would give "hope to the world for all future time." The burden of Justice Douglas' argument is contained in a passage near the close of his comments.

> Abraham Lincoln is a more powerful symbol of the equality of man than ever before. The Declaration of Independence is still a force that lifts the hearts of men the world over. These ideas of independence, "consent of the governed," equality of freedom, and justice are products of non-Communist societies. We indeed have first claim to them. Yet the monopoly over them which the Communists claim makes Khrushchev believe that Communism is the wave of the future. It need not be.

These are noble sentiments, and one can only hope that Abraham Lincoln carries more weight and provides more hope at the rice roots of Asia than Karl Marx. What is more likely is that the great masses now on the move all around the world have heard of neither and are equally unfamiliar with the Declaration of Independence and the *Communist Manifesto*. Nevertheless, the message of Justice Douglas comes through loud and clear: not too long ago the revolutionary spirit of America fired the imagination of people everywhere, and today we can do no less than support the surging masses as they seek their own independence and freedom.

If the appeal is strong, the analogy is wrong—not entirely, perhaps, but enough to suggest that the nature of our own revolution has for too long been misunderstood. The editors of *Saturday Review*, in introducing the analysis of Justice Douglas, ask two pertinent questions: "Are we still comfortable in the presence of revolutionary movements? Do we still believe in revolution for others when others want it?" Justice Douglas, in attempting to give an answer, writes that in the American witch-hunt that followed World War II "We of the West—rich in the democratic tradition of revolution—no longer published books on the subject. We let the Communists preempt the field." Having lost our pride in "revolution," we allowed it to become identified with Communism. "The prejudice of Americans against 'revolution' was so great," Douglas writes, "that if a student had asked at the loan desk in any library for a book on how to conduct a revolution, the librarian would probably have detained him while she called the FBI." Maybe so. But the Justice, in his earnest and commendable desire to see the United States become once again the protagonist of independence for all peoples, has overlooked the fact that there is nothing in America's experience with revolution in 1776 which would equip its present leaders or the great majority of its citizens with the necessary ideological and emotional fanaticism to write contemporary revolutionary tracts.

The strength of the Communist mission in the world today and the ambivalence of dedicated liberals can each be illuminated, at least in part, by the realization that there is no direct or unbroken line from the American Revolution through the Russian Revolution of 1917 down to the revolution in China in 1949. The Castro revolution in Cuba, so close to our own shores that its impact was perhaps more

immediately felt, has caused confusion in liberal circles because so many social reformers in the American tradition have never understood that Americans were never revolutionaries in the twentieth-century meaning of that term. When American liberals proclaim that the peoples of Asia and Africa today are enduring a "democratic revolution," they should also know that we in this country never had to endure a similar one of our own. If we continue to identify the political upheavals of Jefferson's time with both the great European revolutions of the past and the revolutions of the mid-twentieth century, we shall only succeed in perpetuating the distortion of the orgins and sources of our own political tradition. There still is wisdom in knowing thyself first.

Many students of our political history are first introduced to the "revolutionary" tradition in America by way of Vernon Parrington's monumental work, *Main Currents in American Thought*, or by the major ideas represented there and advanced since then by many teachers who have followed in his footsteps. Put simply, the thesis is that America has developed along two separate frontiers, one symbolizing the human rights as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the other affirming the property rights as reflected in the spirit of the United States Constitution. The former states clearly that "all men are created equal," and Parrington claims that the men who framed this document believed in what they said, namely, political, social, and economic equality. He then makes the further argument that the Constitutional movement was a reaction against the principles of the American Revolution and those of the Declaration of Independence in a way reminiscent of Marx's contention that thesis gives rise to its own anti-thesis.

There is a compelling attractiveness to this theory in that it provides those who champion human rights a ready-made argument demonstrating what America *really* stands for. In this view we need only recapture the "spirit of 1776" to take our place on the side of the enslaved peoples of the world who are escaping from their own bondage. The difficulty with the theory is that historically a better case can be made for the view that the equality enunciated in the Declaration of Independence has little relation to what we conceive today to be the meaning of political equality, not to mention economic and social equality. Jefferson was talking about equality before

the law, the same formal and legal equality which John Locke before him had in mind. It was never contended or believed that "all men are equal" in the sense that all men should share equally in political power. The "stake in society" theory of men like John Adams never retreated from the proposition that men should only have a share in political power commensurate with their function in society. One looks in vain, for example, for any movement pressing for absolute sovereignty with respect to the suffrage. Each state in the Union had a strict property qualification as a condition of voting eligibility, and the intention was clear: to make certain that the new republic would be governed by men of "property and principle" and would not fall into the hands of the propertyless mob. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were not in conflict over principles and purposes, but rather were two documents of which the latter was essentially an extension of the former. In this light, the uniqueness of the American experience was the sober temper and reason of its revolutionary outlook. Our revolutionary leaders had little in common with such missionary zealots as Robespierre and Lenin. In large measure, the fact that Americans remained "politically sober" in 1776 meant that as a nation we could follow a course of political pragmatism rather than messianic violence. Liberals would do well to appreciate the insight of Gunnar Myrdal when he said that America is conservative, but the principles conserved are mainly liberal. Professor Louis Hartz has made the same point in saying that the remarkable thing about our own "revolutionary spirit" was not that it looked forward to the future but that it worshipped the past as well. How else, he asks, can we understand the philosophy of a liberal revolution?

That ours was a liberal revolution is a fact of enormous importance. One reason why the Soviet Union moves much more swiftly than we do in aligning itself with the anti-colonial uprisings all over the world is that some forty years ago it threw over its own feudal past by means of a violent revolution which bore no resemblance to our own. This is not to overlook the purely political considerations which motivate Communist decisions at every turn or to deny that the Communists are substituting one form of bondage for another. It is only to point out that in its own move for independence from Great Britain, America lacked the revolutionary fervor

necessary to sustain a total onslaught on existing social institutions, because these very institutions which had served the thirteen colonies, if perhaps inadequately, were never to be discarded but only reformed. America, in other words, had no feudal past which the revolution of 1776 was to overthrow in an orgy of violence.

It is instructive to examine revolutionary movements, not merely for what they set out to accomplish, but for the social goals they did not need to achieve. The striking differences between the American and French Revolutions are testimony that our liberal political heritage is not always adequate as a gauge by which to judge the meaning of today's revolutionary movements. There was no parallel to the *ancien regime* of France on our own soil. No monarchy existed on our continent, and the closest we have ever come to it is the enthronement of royalty à la Hollywood. There were many aristocrats in America, but there was no aristocracy in the European sense of the word. In France, the established Church was not only an entrenched conservative institution but a property-owning class closely identified with the nobility. In America there was no Church but many churches, and in New England there were religious groups in competition with each other. In no sense was there a single Church operating as a major property holder. The middle classes in France, striving for political power, had to launch a frontal attack on the Church as a center of power and property. In this country, there was no Church standing in the way of the rising middle class. To this day in France the Church is deeply involved in the nation's political affairs, with the result that the French voter often finds it difficult to separate Church matters from his politics. In the United States the religious diversity which has contributed to our pluralist tradition stands in sharp contrast to the deep cleavage between clerical and anti-clerical forces in French society. Nor has there been a history of bitter conflict in the United States between a standing army and the people, for the very simple reason that this country, unlike France, has had no tradition of glorious victories in its pre-revolutionary period with which the military could become identified. For all of these reasons, the French Revolution constituted a total rejection of the past, whereas in America the liberal revolution was in many respects a fulfillment of it.

Among many liberals it has frequently been intellectually un-

fashionable to talk in a way that would lay stress on our past. The concern for tradition has usually been left to the conservative to celebrate, while the liberal looks to the future and presses for change. Yet in much the same way that the child is father to the man (which, incidentally, is a conservative psychological insight about human behavior that liberals readily accept) the youthful America of thirteen colonies produced a revolution that kept its ties with much of what had gone before, at the same time that it set the stage for what was to come. In pre-revolutionary America there had been experience with representative institutions in the form of colonial legislatures which served to channel middle-class power. France, on the other hand, could point to no comparable experience or tradition at the time of its revolution. Parliament itself had not met for over a century. Professor Norman Jacobson has pointed out that the appeal of the middle classes in America and France, while clearly evident in both countries, was nonetheless made on different grounds. The French slogan before 1792 of Fraternity, for example, held out the promise of an equalitarian community. In the United States the call was for life, liberty, and property, an appeal to economic gain fully in keeping with the major reason the Puritans originally came to the New World. Tom Paine himself had argued strongly for the desirability of acquiring and enjoying property without dictation from any central authority. In France after 1792 there was no emphasis on economic gain and property.

The American Revolution was a sober, mature act. As Professor Jacobson has put it, it was not a substitute for reform but *one step* toward something else. Americans were demanding the right to build their own future with their own institutions, fully intent on moving ahead by political and constitutional means. The revolution was to "set the stage and bring about the conditions for continued reform and social change through representative institutions." In France the situation was very different. The revolution was to accomplish by force what had not been done for two hundred years. Social reform was to arise out of the ashes of the revolution. Through violence, the power relationships of French society were to be completely transformed.

There are lessons here for our own times. Far from having ex-

perience with social revolution, America is among the minority of nations in the world which has been able to develop and prosper on pretty much its own terms. Rather than living under the pressure of a centralized authority, we have been able to foster a tradition of localism in our political affairs and, with but one serious exception, to maintain a relatively satisfactory competition of sections and interests. There has been no intense American nationalism or even a vital sense of mission. Our national holidays—the Fourth of July, for example—are notably lacking in political overtones and are as much a chance to get to a doubleheader as anything else. We have our national heroes—Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln—all of a different stand of timber from, say, Napoleon or Stalin.

The American liberal who fervently wants his country to support the "democratic revolutions" which are reshaping many parts of the world today must recognize that what he is asking is not easily or automatically encouraged by the liberal tradition which has set the direction and boundaries of our political development. This is not to say that the liberal must stand aside while others move in, but only that he will need new and different resources on which to draw in order to understand the ramifications of revolution in a revolutionary era. For the conservative there is little about these social upheavals which is attractive to him. They plainly are not his social cup of tea. For the liberal, however, there is more than enough to elicit his sympathy, and Justice Douglas is surely right in urging the United States to promote rather than oppose democratic revolutions against conditions of economic feudalism wherever they exist in the world today. But the liberal will find that his backing and support is frequently mixed with reservations and doubts. These revolutions—Castro's is a good example—are not in the liberal mold and often produce a painful dilemma for the humanitarian liberal who can never quite allow himself to separate means from ends. Thus the liberal is torn. He knows that the feudal conditions in societies too long kept in servitude must be removed, but he is also aware, in the words of Karl Popper, that "a violent revolution which tries to attempt more than the destruction of tyranny is at least as likely to bring about another tyranny as it is likely to achieve its real aims."

Someone has remarked that revolution is for society what a passionate love is for the individual, and that those who experience it

are marked forever, separated from their own past and from the rest of mankind. If there is no reason to doubt that many American liberals have captured the ecstasy of love, there is some reason to wonder if they can be kindled by the soul-purging fires of revolution. For revolution calls in question the foundations of social life, and it can seldom be grasped by those who have not experienced it.

Fall Dance

By LARRY RUBIN

The shower spuming down the corridor
And all my naked brothers standing
In that rain, as soft as old October
Sliding needles into flesh, soap
Slick upon white tile (cold leaves
Outside), air thick with hope of thrust.

Tiled vaults echoing with warm cries;
Towels, friction, flesh dry and warm
(But soap smells mingle with October smoke),
Fresh ironed starch of laundered shirts,
Click of cuff-links snapping into place,
Shoes of mirrored black, like ebony

Polished in October. Clean—oh clean
And sweet—strength flowing beneath blue wool,
Molding their limbs like uniforms—out under
The congealed stars, racing their chariots
Along the ancient roads of swift desire,

Across the waiting tundra of October.

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The Sheep's in the Meadow

By MARVIN SCHILLER

■ During the summer our street clothes used to hang in an out of the way closet, forgotten until the time came for the trip back to our homes in New York City. We might notice the wooly sports jackets, the long pants, the rayon summer suits squeezed among bulky black ponchos and rubber raincoats when we went to the bunk's "back room" (as it was called) to get from the top shelf of the open closet a game of Monopoly or checkers with which to while away a rainy afternoon, or when we secreted beneath the heavy folds of tucked away sweaters and spare blankets some box of cookies or candies that had been sent by a thoughtful parent or relative who knew that summer camp was a hardship without familiar delicacies.

Our city clothes suspended patiently, like a family of cautious chimpanzees gripping a cage pole, served to remind us of our mortality, of the fact that summer would end; that we would have to leave this beloved place, this place we dreamed of and yearned for during the rest of the year. We loved our two months at camp more than anything else. There were one's *real* friends. And how much closer we used to feel to our counselors than to our mothers or fathers! One was filled in October or March or May with memories of having lain awake on a mountain cold night, snug beneath the blankets and the unfurled jellyroll while one's counselor improvised a bedtime story about the Cropsey Maniac or some ghost closeted in an East Prussian castle; there were memories of having pleased one's

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counselor by passing the swimming test, or the woodcraft test, of having won his admiration by excelling at nature studies or baseball. In retrospect it seems that the entire summer was designed around a series of tests of our most diverse abilities, from dramatics to volleyball, from arts and crafts to group singing, and of course the programs were arranged so that even the least able among us would return to the city with a feeling of accomplishment and, perhaps, embroidered on the sleeve of the required camp sweater, the chevrons and stripes of colored ribbon emblematic of some esteemed quality of human behavior, woodsmanship or leadership, cleanliness or athletic prowess.

It is no strain on my memory at all to reach back seventeen years and see again our raftered, peak-roofed cabins with the cots jutting out into a center aisle, the bare, unvarnished wood floors, the screened windows that had shutters but no glass, the unpainted walls on whose horizontal stretches we carved our names or painted them with liquid shoe polish—the black was more noticeable but the brown more harmonious and better suited to the decor—printing carefully with the corked, round, felt dauber that was stuck in the bottle. I can see at least six separate summers spent in different cabins at the same camp, and I remember easily how, on each of these occasions, we blazed our names on the wall, the year, the names of our counselors, and the number of our bunk. Those of us who returned summer after summer were considered a kind of aristocracy, we were the old families, the nobility, and felt about the camp something akin to ownership, as if this were our true and only life and the other seasons of the year merely an interlude of disguise, untrue to our essential beings which we brought to light by discarding, in the classical metamorphosis of Clark Kent-into-Superman, our creased long pants and jackets in favor of khaki-colored camp shorts, dark blue sleeveless sweaters with circular camp medallions on the chest, and high-topped sneakers for fleetness of foot.

But in the year 1943, the year I remember more clearly than any other, the neat and easy distinction between summer and the rest of the year became diffuse, my sense of detachment from sidewalk life was disturbed, for our group—we must have ranged in age between thirteen and fourteen—was required to wear those constricting city suits in the middle of the summer.

It began with an exchange of notes pencilled on embossed paper napkins, written during a noontime meal by one of the more socially experienced, more romantically inclined boys among us and delivered by still another romantic youth, some two or three years older, who served as our waiter and liaison with the girl campers who were our mirror selves, living in similar encampment just beyond a wooden footbridge that spanned a brook into which the camp lake emptied prettily. The act of delivery was simply accomplished, for we shared with the girls' camp a communal kitchen: the dining room was a two-winged wooden ranch building whose core was a kitchen and bakery. The waiters loaded their trays at the same counter that served the waitresses, and it was no trouble to pass a note from one camp to another. In this way, sisters and brothers and cousins communicated, and lovers too—for another of the tests of summer was of amatory skill. Of course, the counselors led freer lives than the campers. The counselors of either camp were free after we had been put to sleep, and they would meet at the boys' social hall, where there was a phonograph and a sleek basketball court on which to dance. If we were awake we could look through the open shutters of our bunk and see flashlights moving from the direction of the girls' camp, and similar beams cutting across the boys' campus toward the social hall. There, lights would be blazing and, faintly, if the night air was dry and crisp, we might make out the reverberations of some popular song and the shadowy figures of our counselors dancing. There were also—we were to discover as we kept returning each summer and our instincts ripened—camp sites cleared out of the surrounding woods by couples of bygone summers, and there one could make a fire, roast hot dogs and marshmallows, and lie down blanketed with one's girl. Some of these romances, we were to learn, led to marriage, or, more frequently, to dating in New York. That summer, however, this was a possibility remote from our minds—until, late in July, the exchange of notes established the fact that there were sufficient numbers of thirteen-year-old boys and girls who wished to meet, as did the older groups, for a "social."

There had been occasions for our seeing the girls we might spend the evening with, for appraising them and coming to tentative conclusions about them, for the girls' camp came *en masse* to our social hall every Wednesday night for the weekly movie that was

a standard form of camp entertainment. The girls trooped in, coming out of the mountain twilight like a procession of graduates from some homemaking college in the woods, singing with patriotic gusto that set our teeth on edge one of their famous girls' camp songs. There must have been two hundred girls, beauties of all shapes and sizes and spanning the first twenty years of life. They would be seated in rows of long benches, taking up half the social hall, separated from us by as wide an aisle as could be contrived—and the aisle was under the surveillance of our counselors who sat on the ends of the benches in order to prevent lovers from sitting together in the aisle, an effort that was not always successful under cover of darkness and the excitement of the film, especially since the counselors themselved seized any opportunity for putting an arm around a girl.

On Saturday mornings, for a half hour at a time, we had a more authorized period of co-educational encounter, for the girls came to join in the religious services that were an important and lovely part of our upbringing then. The process of meeting a girl took place afterward, always, it now seems, on a Saturday morning that was screaming with sunshine, in front of the social hall-turned-into-synagogue. There, some of us carrying box cameras that had our name tapes pasted on their backs, all of us dressed in spanking white for the Sabbath, we would stand in nervous groups, and boys who knew certain girls from the city or from previous summers would make easy introductions that seemed at the moment inconsequential or trivial but that often had beneath them a disturbing beat, a pit of apprehension or anticipation that would keep one's mind troubled or full of wonder for days afterward. Some of us were advanced enough to take the girls for a walk down to our bunks, to show them how we lived, and this only added to the feeling of shyness and uncertainty on the part of boys like myself who had, by that summer, made but the most fumbling of awkward beginnings at flirtation and dating, but who, as if to make up for it, might be leaders of sport, authorities on bird-lore, kingpins of boyish mischief-making.

The desire for a social having been established, our counselors arranged for an early consummation of the event. They asked each of us if there were a particular girl with whom we wished to be paired off. Those of us who, like myself, were without affiliation, were provided for by collaboration between boy and girl counselors

who worked out likeable twosomes, paying particular attention to matched heights, tall boys for tall girls. These couplings our counselors kept secret, however; we were to make our discoveries in a dramatic way on the night of the dance.

The days leading up to the social went by too quickly for my taste, and there were other boys who shared my anxiety. By the afternoon of the dance, no one could speak of anything else. During the rest-hour following lunch that day, we polished our shoes and brushed out our travel suits. Clean shirts were loaned to boys who had forgotten to reserve them. Bunkmates plagued one another with prophesies of doom to come, of unsuitable matings that were soon to be revealed. Boys danced with boys on the bare floor between the beds, seriously, desperately attempting to master the fox-trot and Lindy Hop in time for the night ahead. No one was more frightened than I. I was not a dancer. I had hardly ever spoken to a girl; I had no sister with whom I might have established a sense of ease in female chit-chat. I was one of those studious city boys beguiled by walks in the woods; I collected leaves, mushrooms, and Indian pipes and catalogued them; I was a virtuoso swimmer; for entertainment I read such works as Dumas and Conan Doyle, *Model Airplane News* and *The Open Road for Boys*.

After supper we dressed; counselors loaned us after-shave lotion to use as cologne, hair dressing, and, above all, words to bolster our faltering courage. Each of us was checked over: did our socks match? were all our buttons buttoned? and, as an embarrassing but necessary embellishment, each of us was provided with the means by which we would meet our partners. This took the form of a stringed, yellow shipping tag, prepared by the girl counselors, on which—in blue and white, the camp colors—was drawn a hasty, decorative daisy and the words to half of a familiar nursery rhyme. The tags were looped into our lapel button holes. We were told that the girls would have tags whose couplets completed ours.

So on a clear summer night in 1943, when the moon was just rising over a plump Catskill hilltop, a golden tear dropping placidly across the surface of a mountain lake, twenty-four boys, two abreast, marched along the lake edge, a strung-out procession of celestial choir boys, of little monks gliding atop a gravelly walk on the way to midnight services. We shuffled past the rowboats in their triangular

berths, creaking in their moorings, the water making a clop-clop sound and seeping through the boat bottoms to form miniature boat-ponds, each with an individual moon, then past the lined-up camp canoes upside down on wooden horses, scimitar-edged brass bows reflecting the increasing light. Our faces shone, our shoes and jackets had an unaccustomed feel and weight, our long trousers were held at the waist by stippled-flower leather belts, link belts, braid belts, Indian bead belts, all manner and color of belts which had been hand-fashioned by suntanned fingers at the arts and crafts shop during the preceeding three weeks. Trees converged on us, the wings of birds fluttered mysteriously in the darkness, frogs that had been bleating went silent as we tramped over the wooden footbridge and into territory we had never entered before, Camp Mojave for Girls. Its entrance path tunneled through aged oak and quaking aspens and was lit by diffused cones of light shed down from camouflaged perches in the trees, leading ineluctably to the lit-up lantern-hung portico of the girls' social hall.

No blur of years can destroy the distinctness with which I still see my thirteen-year-old self climbing the wide steps of that porch nor hide from me my painful skulkiness, the self-consciousness I felt when I stepped into the crepe-paper hung and decorated social hall and saw blossoming before me the white-shorted girls of my Saturday mornings, the girls in slacks and heavy sweaters of the film nights —all of them suddenly transformed by cotton party dresses and faint make-up into the delicate girls they were. They stood in chattering groups, or alone like myself, lined along the far wall of the high-ceilinged, beamed, frame-exposed hall. Coaxed by our counselors, we made our final invasion, someone started a record on the portable phonograph, and then began a series of unveilings and searchings, of abrupt or stilted readings of rhyme tags. The more forward of the girls came to meet us, showed us their tags which they wore pinned to their dresses, or dangling from buttons or from bracelets on their lovely, sun-browned wrists. Already couples had begun to dance, waxpaper punch cups were being lofted from a folding table stacked with refreshments. A girl counselor I had never seen before but who seemed to know me took my hand and led me to my counterpart, a girl called Jessica, a slender, dark-haired girl with the bluest eyes I'd ever seen, whose tanned, soft-featured face

seemed to duplicate my own timidity. Our rhyme halves were matched, and I hurriedly removed my tag, for it seemed to be such a blatant, revealing advertisement of my innermost self, encouraging me to do what I could not possibly bring myself to do:

Little Boy Blue
Come blow your horn . . .

Jessica drew my attention to the fox-trot whose melody was now being amplified and aimed at us in inescapable cross-fire from diagonally placed loudspeakers in opposite corners of the hall. Yes, I would try to dance. I placed my hand antiseptically on her waist, barely making contact with the fabric of her peasant-style dress that was billowy at the skirt, open in a gentle curve around her throat. We clasped hands in moist hopefulness, crooked our arms, and began a confused, halting progress toward the other dancers at the center of the floor. Her steps were graceful, her body swaying ever so lightly, attuned to the rhythm of the music, while I, holding myself far away from her in mortal fear of causing my body to touch hers, moved my heavy feet stiffly and too high off the floor, counting to myself, dancing mechanically in time not to the music but to the memorized pattern of "The Arthur Murray Magic Step" which I had seen diagrammed with dotted lines and arrows and outlined shoes in a *Popular Science Monthly* advertisement and which was guaranteed to provide for its practitioners social success. Graciously, Jessica did not ask that I repeat what plainly was not inimical to me; perhaps a game of ping-pong? Gratefully I led her out to the porch where, under two green-shaded lamps such as hang over gambling tables, the reflectors swarming with moths tinnily hitting the metal sides, two ping-pong tables had judiciously been prepared. We took up sides across the table, I served, she made the return, I followed the ball in the difficult light and hit again . . . and, thus brought around to activity that was familiar to me, I relaxed, relaxed even more when Jessica, after missing one ball completely, put on a pair of eyeglasses, for now her softly intellectualized face made her more human to me, less forbidding in her femininity. I brought her cups of punch during the night, we were partners during the party games and square dances, we ate ice cream out of dixie cups while sitting quietly on the porch steps and looking out at the moonlit

lake. She was a very well brought up girl, not at all aggressive (I won the single ping-pong match we played). She conveyed to me the feeling that she was different from the other girls in her group, perhaps younger in some ways, less secure in herself than they were.

Eliot Sands, one of my socially mature bunkmates, brought his girl out to the steps and sat next to us, and we listened to him facilely regaling his date with anecdotes. His bubbling conversational wake flooded us into silence, I felt hopelessly inept, but when Eliot and his girl later went away, Jessica grinned up at me conspiratorially, and all at once she became the most desirable girl I'd ever imagined existed.

There must have been two or three other dances at which we were partners that summer, but the heady success of the original one has bullied all the others out of my memory. An afternoon hayride in which, with our group, we were joggled along a dusty country road lingers fragrantly and crisply in my mind; certainly each Saturday morning following services we met in the comforting company of other couples and bravely talked. I remember having in my possession for many years something akin to a team photograph: six or eight of us, some crouched like football players, others standing in the rear, posed before the boys' camp flagpole, myself erect, my face torn by indecision as the shutter clicks catching me in the struggle of trying to bring an affectionate hand down onto Jessie's shoulder. Once, on my birthday, she sent via waiter her portion of that evening's dessert—a triangle of huckleberry pie in which she'd embedded a thin candle and a small white flag on which she had pencilled "Have a sweet day." My bunkmates shrieked with laughter and teased me unmercifully, but secretly I was enchanted and even cherished her little note.

Sometimes we met on the lake, when our groups, deployed in convoys of canoes or two-man, flat-bottom rowboats happened coincidentally to have boating periods at the same hour. My impression is that I simply paddled heroically by her, saw her wave at me, and waved in return, showing off then as if I were some muscular Indian brave trying not to notice her nearly naked body, her slim, brown arms and legs, or the beginning, gentle swell of her young breasts that were apparent in her bathing suit. What we spoke of at those times on the lake, or if we spoke at all, I no longer recall—only that I

looked forward desperately to seeing her and felt triumphant and rewarded when I did and agonizingly disappointed when I did not. Was it love? I had no doubt that it was. During the rest of the summer my scholarly mania for making plaster casts and spatter prints of Catskill flowers and leaves was all but surpassed by the constantly renewed impressions of Jessica that my mind served up to me for contemplation and delight.

Nothing in all the preceding years had had the power to bring me closer to a knowledge of profound sorrow than the breakup of camp, the packing away of my camp uniforms, the severing of ties with the six or ten people I had grown most to love in the world. In final separation from them, in the railroad terminal across the river from New York, I would nearly cry. My parents' welcoming arms would seem woeful, inadequate, unwanted. But that year was different, for just as the city, in the form of my street clothes, had intruded upon my mountain nights, so an essential part of the summer gave promise of continuing into the fall: Jessica and I, about to be separated not by a mere footbridge or messhall kitchen but by the immense obstacle of residing in cruelly distant boroughs, had agreed to correspond.

These letters became the center of my existence. I lived to see an envelope of hers in the morning mail and to lock myself in my room in the afternoon to reread her letter for the tenth time and finally prepare an answer. My memory has catalogued for easy reference and withdrawal the image of her pink, scented stationery and the unsloped, almost printed configurations of her neat, studious handwriting with which she invited me to recall our summer, so many sentences beginning with "Remember when. . . ."; and others concerning camp friends who resided in her suburban neighborhood, and news of her commencing again her piano lessons, her private school, a visit to Boston to see her grandparents and an uncle who was a surgeon returned on furlough, wounded, from the war in Europe.

In my letters I took on a personality that differed from the self I knew in real life. The epistolatory me was a foreign correspondent dispatching exciting cables and communiques, full of dash and wit and glamor, quoting from the books I read, imitating the grand

styles of the authors recommended by a teacher in whose special, after-school class I was enrolled. The letters took their source from a stream of my imagination in which I was transformed into a young man not unlike my bunkmate Eliot Sands—he of the porch steps anecdotes—who smoked cigarettes, performed the tango, wore fifty dollar suits, and sneaked off into the dark with girls to do unimaginable things with them. Like Eliot, in my fantasies, I had a proud bearing and, with a skill that was vaguely continental, I would lead Jessica through an evening of dancing and handsome descriptions of my newest exploits, would guide her gently to the night's climax which, in my dreams, was always represented by our almost suffocating one another to death with deep, moist kisses burning with love. The night after reading her letter about her surgeon uncle—it must have been late in September—I had a vision of myself returned in ragged uniform from The Front, nearly dying, my head bandaged and blooded, and Jessica bending over me, the power of her love bringing me back to life. For many nights afterward, the idea of her having been so close to me in that imagined bed would return and fill me with obscure and painful desires, would cause me to lie awake in shame, tossing with irresolution, longing to fall into a deep sleep.

The weeks went by, and the longer our separation grew, the more unbounded and almost unbearable my fantasies became. They caused my love for Jessica to become warmer and at the same time more hopeless, as if my adolescent self knew that only torment would ever bring me the courage to ask to see her again.

As it turned out, Jessica took matters into her own hands. Having received permission to give a camp reunion-Halloween party, she asked that I come and be her date. I went and, mum and nervous, all but made a fool of myself. Again among those jubilantly reunited bunkmates, I was shy with Jessie and acted as I had during those early Saturday mornings when we all seemed to be playing for effect, to be detached and unconcerned with the girls who were properly our dates but about whom, later, in the privacy of our bunks, we would think in terms of the most elaborate romance. I remember standing in a corner, watching Jessica act the hostess, serving soft drinks to her guests. She was wearing her dark hair in two, thick braids to attain an "American Girl" effect she thought

was appropriate to Halloween. It made her look sweet and schoolgirlish, I was excited to be with her, but I did not know how to express it. Yet a moment did come that night when the adventurous letter writer and fantasist seemed to stride off my flashy pages, out of my mind, and plant himself in reality. It was late, we were playing kissing games, and Jessica and I were called on to kiss in front of the others. We blushed and were flustered, and it turned out to be the fleetest brush of lips upon cheek. The kiss outraged our friends but it was done and meanwhile had released in me all the remote, exciting premonitions of lust, all the mysterious sensations that I had imagined a truly consummated kiss would convey to me.

It was at that party that, finally overcoming my timidity, inspired by tales only half-understood and overheard among older boys, I asked Jessie to spend New Year's Eve with me. Lovingly, she accepted, and so great was my emotion that all I could think of saying was, "You're amazing, you know?" Later, we agreed to think of how we wished to spend that night. We would write to one another and make a definite plan. She was terribly pleased.

Among my school and neighborhood friends, during the next months, I bragged and swaggered and pompously described my impending date. But though I boasted and gave off a dapper front, I was beneath it all frightened. It would be the first time I had ever been completely alone with a girl I loved. I had no idea of what subjects one discussed when alone with a girl, or how one behaved: Should I hold her hand while walking or only when crossing the street? Should I bring along a corsage or send one to her? Was it preferable to meet her at home or in the city? Should I accompany her to the door of her home, or should I ask to be invited in? In or out, should I kiss her goodnight? All this was unknown to me, and yet I had dared to ask her out for the most important night of the year!

When in one letter Jessica informed me that her father did not like the idea of her going out alone on New Year's Eve, I knew for a moment an immense relief; but the letter went on: she had cried, she had implored, she had been miserable at his refusal, and finally he had relented—and now how happy she was, how expectant!

Her optimism gave me heart. I forced confidence into myself. I made inquiries, I read a book of etiquette. In December I wrote her

with authority that we would meet on the steps of the Hotel Astor, a rendezvous spot that I had learned was the most sophisticated. We would attend a film and, later on, I stated, we might go to the Mayflower Coffee Shop or Child's or Toffenetti's for waffles. I set the hour of our meeting for seven.

At five o'clock that night it was already dark, and behind my closed door I was dressing as carefully as a groom. I wore a new double-breasted brown worsted suit with a faint herringbone design and wide lapels like a devil's ears. My camp-made leather wallet, bulky with twisted, raised stitches around the edges, I stuffed with money I had been saving. Hatless, in an overcoat of rough blue wool, I was given a proud farewell by my mother and father, and I set out into the strangely still streets of Brooklyn. I felt superior to the neighborhood friends I was leaving behind, felt older than my years, and was full of compliments for myself as I headed into the subway that was carrying its packs of passengers out of that dull borough and into the unstable, tantalizing excitement of Manhattan.

Times Square, when I ascended to it with my fellow subway travellers (all dressed as if for a huge wedding in a family of which we were all distant members), was nearly impassable, the sidewalks swarming with celebrants, with bundled up sailors and soldiers already hugging their girls and their rationed bottles of whiskey. Heavy-coated, severe-looking policemen sat astride noble horses along the curbside to prevent the revellers from spilling out in front of the crawling traffic. The night was cold but the crowd kept one warm. The giant electric signs and marquees were lit up for the first time since blackout regulations had been instituted, and the atmosphere was alive with the feeling that victory was just around the corner. Cardboard noisemakers, substitutes for the unavailable tin models, were being hawked and bought at makeshift stands every few yards along Broadway, and one's ears were continually serenaded by the horns' rasps and bleats. An old gentlemen next to me held a Boy Scout bugle to his lips and blasted away at every fourth step and during the interim shouted out, "V for Victory!" His neighbors cheered him on. There was a great sense of camaraderie. How did one join them? Where were they all walking to? Was I supposed to buy a funny hat and a rattle for Jessica?

It was a quarter of seven when the crowd washed me up among the other gallants who had established the Astor steps as the beachhead from which to launch their night of merrymaking. I looked over their faces and felt a twinge: they all looked so much more knowing than I. I looked away. I looked for Jessica to materialize out of the clogging, curdling crowd and, as the time passed and I waited, a fiend came to life beside me and whispered in my ear: How was I planning to greet Jessica? Where exactly would we go after the movie? Suppose the lines in front of the movie houses were too long and we couldn't get in? Suppose I hadn't brought along enough money? I felt for my wallet. Its thick, substantial outline calmed me.

But when I saw that it was already ten past seven, I began to wonder if something had gone wrong. Suppose her father had changed his mind and had refused to let her leave? Suppose at this very moment her father was calling my house in an effort to cancel the plans? I grew uneasy. All about me there was a hectic interplay of meetings taking place, like abrupt, jerky scenes in old silent movies, joyous greetings and beginnings, huggings and kissings, enthusiastic forays into the festive night. Whole platoons were taking up new positions on the steps, arriving and departing, while I stayed glued, like a signpost, to one spot.

At 7:25 two hotel doormen came thumping down the steps, carrying a saw-horse to be set up as a barricade in front of the haberdashery store window next to the entranceway, and as I watched them in their gaudy red coats that nearly scraped the ground, their golden, fringed epaulets and spic, red-visored caps, I suddenly saw just over their shoulders Jessica gracefully making her way through the crowd. My heart almost stopped beating. I was stunned by her appearance: for an instant I had actually failed to recognize her! She wore clothes I had never seen before, a charming little hat with a dark veil over her forehead and eyes; everything about her was stylish and correct; her expression was that of a girl who was accustomed to spending many evenings in the city, a mature, unapproachable young woman just in from her country home to take the night in stride. All the confidence I had been pumping into myself was suddenly drained away. I felt crippled by infantilism, dumb and awkward and inexperienced. She had grown up over-

night. She had out-aged me by ten years in a mere eight weeks. How could she possibly want to spend the night with me? How could I possibly consider spending the night with her? I longed to find myself simply taking part in a dream, to forget this New Year's life whose every ordinary gesture was beyond my boyish skills. Impulsively, I had turned away. Suddenly I was running up the steps, groping wildly into the hotel. I squeezed past the tight groups of older people who had sought sanctuary in the warm hotel lobby. I went blindly past the hotel shops and tripped into a party of gay celebrants in tuxedos and evening gowns who looked at me as if I were a curiosity. Seeing a door that led to a side street, I ran through it and found myself again outside, smacked by the cold air, aware of the street's darkness that erupted in a blaze of light on Broadway. Cabs and limousines were pulling continually to the curb near a hotel awning, and passengers were disembarking and unknotting as they hurried into the hotel.

I remember clearly how, not knowing where to go, I stopped and thought crazily: perhaps it was not Jessica. Perhaps it was someone else altogether who, in my excitement, I mistook for Jessica. How could that beautiful girl possibly be the girl of my summer camp, of our letters, of the homey reunion party? I decided to return to the hotel steps, to walk inconspicuously among the northward-marching crowd to see if it were really she.

Borne along by the sluggish human traffic, hidden among that moving album of pink, cold-nipped, carefree faces but feeling as prominent as a death mask among them, I went slinking past the steps which were like the stage of an open-air theatre and saw her again; without doubt it was she: how distraught she looked! What a look of anguish on her lovely face as she searched for me, looked at the sudden sparkle of wrist watch on her smartly gloved wrist, looked again at the passing throng of New Year's strollers—but still I kept walking, unnoticed, hemmed in among the revellers. Clouds closed in on the rising moon, the stars disappeared, a light fog reflected red neon high over Broadway, the animated signs buzzed ominously and proclaimed with frenetic insistence their foolish, unwanted messages. The pulsing bulbs that ribboned the *Times* building announced that allied bombers had dropped 250 tons of bombs on Maday, New Guinea, that American troops had

advanced southwest of Acquafondato. And how proclaim the despicable act that was being committed right here? An inner voice pleaded with me that I return, but even as it taunted me with the most desperate images of Jessica left stranded and tricked and horribly bewildered, my sinful feet were carrying me further away. I found myself, almost in a daze, paying a ticket cashier to see a movie, but what that movie was and what the name of the theatre was have long ago been erased from my memory.

The next afternoon my mother and father asked about my date, and I lied to them. I told them that Jessica and I had had a wonderful time, had seen a film together and had gone to a restaurant afterward, had later gone home by taxicab . . . but even as I created the story for their benefit I was ashamed of myself and never repeated it.

The most shameful act I had ever committed in my life, I committed the next day. Throbbing with guilt, with a hatred of myself that I could no longer bear, I was suddenly seized with a kind of madness, with a disgusting manner of expiating myself before Jessica's eyes, and feverishly I sat down and composed a letter. In it, in the most hurt tones I could call up, I stated that I was disappointed in her, that I had waited until 7:30 for her to appear, that I did not think she was the kind of girl to break a date, especially a New Year's Eve date, that I did not care if I never saw her again.

Some days later she replied, explaining her lateness, the crowds, the slowed-down trains; she was sorry, disappointed. . . . I could not finish the letter, and I never answered it.

But I could not keep her out of my mind.

For many nights after that sordid evening visions of Jessica distressed were played out again and again in the shadows above my bed, tormenting me, accusing me. . . . And it was on one such night that I moved a lamp close to the bedside and lay awake trying to read a book that had been loaned to me by one of my teachers. The subject was the real personages of children's nursery rhymes, and I read it dully. Then, without warning, I came to a paragraph entitled "Little Boy Blue," and all at once my head beat with recollection and foreboding. I read that the shepherd boy of my rhyme-ticket of introduction to Jessica was symbolic of the pompous Cardinal Wolsey, that "blow up the horn" is an ancient Scottish saying signifying ex-

communication and outlawry. I read that in *The Tragedy of Cardinal Wolsey*, by Thomas Churchyard, first published in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, in 1587, there occur these lines embodying the idea of Little Boy Blue:

> Where is the boy that minds the sheep?
> He's under the haycock fast asleep!
> O, fie on wolves that march in masking clothes
> For to devour the lambs, when shepherd sleeps,
> And woe to you that promise never keeps!

I read the paragraph over again and got out of bed. I walked aimlessly through our dark, silent apartment. I sat alone in the living room. The world was adrift from me. Only the poem clung to me; it was like a cold mouth whispering against my heart, for I knew, even then, that the poem held a dreadful prophecy for me.

October White

By EVELYN ADAMS

This is the white month when the powdered heads
Of dandelions nod in the sun; the milkweed
Brushes its hair on the wind, and every field
Is frosted once with ice at dawn, again
In afternoon with asters. This October
Is white meat of an apple and the snow
That still sleeps high on feathered clouds; but maples
Flash their red and yellow warning brighter,
To caution things may go from white to whiter.

EVELYN S. ADAMS is a native of Maine and now lives in Yarmouth with her husband and three children.

Ocean

By PAUL KENDALL

The tide seems out and never.
What does it portend
For the tolerant lover
Of soft, good-humored men?
They always pay their doctors.

All the lighthouses
Along all the coasts
Are dried in their juices
And curl to question marks,
Photographed by helicopter.

If in the early minutes
We had read their shapes,
We might not have listened
To "Lighthouses are now obsolete,
Considering all factors."

If only we had slept instead,
To dream across rocks and dunes
And touch the simple water-haunted lives
Of nimble lighthouse virgins.
They are their fathers' carvers.

The lighthouse keepers
And the keepers' daughters
Walk where once they trimmed the topsail.
The puzzled fathers poke in kelpy corners
To forget their broken lights in trapping lobsters.

PAUL KENDALL, whose poems last appeared on these pages in the Fall '60 issue, is Professor of English at Ohio University and a well-known historical biographer. He is the author of *Richard the Third*, *Warwick the Kingmaker*, and, to be published this fall, *The Yorkist Age*. A Guggenheim Fellowship for 1961-62 will take him to Europe to complete research for a biography of Louis XI.

The quicker daughters, all maiden senses
Spread to the oozy-rocky plain,
Gaze inward, landward,
Stirred by an old science,
And dream of meeting dry-shod men.

But the shores are blank with pithless tourists
Bringing their question marks to the receded sea.
And a keeper's daughter is hardly to their taste—
Striding with bare feet and the winds in her eye.
And lank hair.

Epithalamium

By PAUL KENDALL

No no, go not to Krogers.
In two days time or even less
Take purse.
But now with shamefast eye
Eschew the fleshly lure of A. and P.,
Gods tomorrow, today ogres.

Let us be old-fashioned and chaste,
Not lusting to possess
Each other's shopping traits
On this our marriage morn.
The glee of guests is gone
And we, alone:
To garner,
Efficiently apartmented,
The increment of built-in certainties.

Come jibe with me and be my live
TV. We will all the pressures prove
Of till-dearth-do-us-part ad-libbed
Breakfast co-starring, as on channel twelve—

Start not to the door so shopping-eyed of mien
And feverish to yield all at the first saunter.
For shame! to flaunt your virgin cart so soon,
Glutting your cargo at the frozen foods,
And lose your jewel at the check-out banter.

That Capsule of Jonah's

By BEATRICE FRACKELTON

The blue premeditated whale made supple
genuflections to the yellow moon,
timing his ballet to her vibrant span.
Legend in a capsular creation,
he danced his innocence oblique to bubble
in angles more than perpendicular
and, sounding, sponged away the thorny stars.

As capsule he was great with room and bath and corridor;
capaciously his inward lobbies arched; tall
ivoried museums breathing Euclid's dream, pure
geometry of rafters: a philosopher's shell
with galleries that crimson animated; murals
of assets spawned in ambergris and lesser oil
and all that luminous delight of undigested pearl.

Astronaut or chimpanzee,
given the keep of that commodious belly,
would have pushed buttons with a conscientious will
or planned a colony.

Down on his fears, palms pressing, blind,
this Jonah-clay within the fish cried, "send,
I pray, deliverance from hell";
and greenly rode his whale
who rode the escalators of the sea.

Some say that Jonah could have been content
or at least more scientifically observant.

BEATRICE FRACKELTON has been writing poetry for years but only recently has sought publication. This is her first poem published outside of her home state of Wisconsin where she has appeared, among other places, in *Creative Wisconsin*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and the quarterly journal of the Wisconsin Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Home Service Magazines: Counselors of the Good Life

By ALBERT ROLAND

■ The line between manners and morals is never easy to draw. And whether it's Emily Post's *Etiquette* or Baldesar Castiglione's *Cortegiano,* every compilation of rules for a certain kind of civilized conduct presupposes some assumptions about human behavior which may be narrow and rather ossified but are essentially moral. In some cases, such as Castiglione's, the connection between proper conduct and the kind of life society considers good is quite clear. This may not be quite as true of Castiglione's latest heirs in our socially engineered age: the hundreds of editors who month after month send off to millions of readers another batch of copies of home service magazines. They appear to be, however, fully as enthusiastic about the "gracious" life as Castiglione was, although sixteenth-century Urbino did understand the word somewhat differently from a twentieth-century suburb. And the editors' advice on everything that pertains to the home reflects a seldom spelled out but ever present philosophy of life, an ideal of what the good life is and how readers should go about living it.

If one had only a Sears catalog and a set of *Better Homes and Gardens* (and this latter is so packed with advertising that we might even dispense with the catalog), one could probably sketch in considerable detail what the good life means to the great majority of Americans, those aptly described by *Fortune's* Daniel Seligman as

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ALBERT ROLAND was for five years an editor of one of the home service magazines. He is now text editor of *America Illustrated,* the U.S.I.A. periodical distributed in Poland and the Soviet Union, and has contributed to several general and scholarly journals.

"the new masses." With *Better Homes and Gardens* alone, of course, one would miss the nuances. The good life is not quite the same for the ambitious young couple whose aspirations are well ahead of their income (*Living for Young Homemakers* is edited to help them bridge the two), or for those who have already arrived and can afford the architect-designed, decorator perfect inspiration of *House & Garden*. Each of the six major home service magazines has staked out for itself a section of the American audience. Each holds up to its readers a curious mirror which is faithful enough to let them recognize themselves, and yet distorted enough to prod their aspirations and goad them along the path of more skillful and socially rewarded consumership.

These half dozen magazines devoted to "home service" distribute every month over ten million copies, grossing an advertising revenue of several million dollars (the combined total in 1960 was $58,015,788). Aside from individual exceptions—*Playboy*'s meteoric rise in the men's field, *TV Guide*'s blanketing of the country within a few short years, and the splashy face-lifting of *McCall's*—the home service magazines have been the great success story of periodical publishing in the last decade. All of them, however, *Living* excepted, date back at least to the 1920's—even though it was the postwar prosperity of a quarter century later that made them prosperous too.[1] *Better Homes and Gardens* began publication in 1922, followed shortly after by *The American Home* and the revamping of *Sunset* from a meager collection of fiction and travel features into a successful service book. The much older, patrician *House Beautiful* and *House & Garden* started in 1896 and 1901 respectively, and while they have had circulation gains they have never reached—nor would they want to reach—a mass audience. A seventh, lesser known home service magazine was *Household*, which dated back to the turn of the century but only around 1950 entered the home service field.

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[1]In *Magazines in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: The University of Illinois Press, 1956), Theodore Peterson reports that: "The combined circulation of *American Home* and *Better Homes and Gardens* increased by about 59 per cent, that of *House Beautiful* and *House & Garden* by about 139 per cent. The combined advertising gross of the four magazines in 1955 was more than two and a half times what it had been in 1946." And this while television was taking over and becoming advertising's giant.

It had a circulation of 2,650,000 copies when it folded in 1958, never having succeeded in convincing advertisers that it was no longer a small-town women's publication.

At a casual glance, women's and home service magazines may appear very much alike. Both usually have articles on cooking and homemaking, on decorating, on many aspects of home life. But the differences, when one takes a closer look, are quite definite. For one thing, the home service magazine is edited for both men and women readers. The goal of "dual readership" guides the pacing of subjects throughout the book, the choice of illustrations and of covers, even the writing of headlines—such as the ploy of heading an article on some very feminine concern with a title like "What Every Husband Should Know About. . . ."

An even more striking difference is in the tone set by the editors, and in the quality of the relationship they seek to establish with readers. In women's magazines, this has long been an almost intimate bond, the magazine being a kind of printed "side talk with girls"—as Edward Bok called one of the first departments he introduced in *The Ladies' Home Journal* at the turn of the century. By contrast, the home service magazine is more businesslike, with the cheerful friendliness of an efficient and earnest counselor—but not a chatty confidant. Partly, this difference follows from the intended readership: both men and women instead of women alone. The main reason, however, appears to be a rather basic divergence in editorial purpose. In the women's field, service is important, but it is subordinated to the function of providing emotionally satisfying, engaging reading. In the home service field, on the other hand, the test of a good article is: Can a reader learn to do something as a result of reading it? This was the formula on which *Better Homes and Gardens* was founded. To a greater or lesser degree—and with some important differences as to the kind of things the reader is supposed to learn to do—it is shared by its brethren and competitors. The home service magazines' ban on fiction (an essential staple in women's publications) is symptomatic of this openly didactic approach. The task is not to entertain or to fulfill an emotional need, but to help readers live the good life here and now, in their better homes and gardens.

In recent years, women's magazines on the whole have suffered a decline, dramatized by the folding of the long-established *Woman's Home Companion*.[2] On the other hand, there has been a boom in "confession" magazines, female counterparts of the various *He, Stag, Male,* and other hairy-chested champions of male escape. Apparently, men and women have truly independent spheres of interest only at the level of "romance" or of guts-and-sex adventure (and at the bottom of the socio-economic scale). Closer to the everyday middle-class world they are being homogenized into the family-at-home.

"The home," Margaret Mead wrote in a *Daedalus* article,

> has now become the reason for existence. . . . Jobs are selected as they will bear on the home. . . . Good works in the form of community service within the social environment right around the home have been moved into home life, as has most of religious participation. . . . The do-it-yourself movement, which parallels so neatly the shortage of skilled labor for home finishing and repairs, is not just a hobby. It is often a pleasant and meaningful contribution to family life. . . . The car, the television set, the pets are seen as contributory to the home.

Add to Margaret Mead's list cooking, gardening, and the family vacation: It almost reads like a prospectus for *Better Homes and Gardens*, today's largest and most conspicuously successful home service magazine,[3] with a circulation of about five million copies.

What is the magazine's audience? According to an Alfred Politz study published by Meredith, there is a definite correlation between frequent readership of *Better Homes and Gardens* and

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[2]Is *McCall's* an exception? Its famous "togetherness" campaign was a cleverly designed device to save face while jumping aboard the home service magazine bandwagon with a "Better Living" home service section. Then another major shift occurred. The new editor, Herbert R. Mayes, dropped home service, introduced a dramatic new format and top by-lines. With aggressive promotion, *McCall's* gained substantially in circulation (over six million copies) and advertising. Once the shiny novelty of it all wears off, the magazine's success will probably depend on effective competition with "general" magazines such as *Life* and the *Post* rather than with other women's magazines.

[3]The gross advertising revenue in 1960 was $25,609,957. *The American Home* came next ($8,309,996), followed in descending order by *House Beautiful, Sunset, House & Garden, Living for Young Homemakers*—roughly at $1,000,000 intervals.

higher than average income, although there is no evidence that it reaches the top social level. As could be expected, its circulation is lightest in the lowest income group, and the bulk of it goes to the great middle class, living in single-family houses in suburbs and smaller cities throughout the country. (It is interesting to note, in this connection, that the magazine seldom features a house whose plan would make it feasible to use one bedroom for a maid, as is often the case in *House & Garden*.)

The emphasis throughout *Better Homes and Gardens* is on practical suggestions, ideas for improvements of home or yard which any reasonably skilled person can handle and most families can afford. The same how-to-do-it approach characterizes articles on other aspects of home life, whether it's child care, the family budget, or marital relationships. An occasional article may echo currently popular concerns—such as conformity in American life—but with no real bite in the argument. The philosophical small change of "The man next door," a monthly column, is a commonplace mixture of sentimentality, obvious comment on family and community mores, and carefully barbless humor.

If we are to find out what *Better Homes and Gardens* editors consider the good life, we must look for it in the kind of environment they advocate. One clue is the choice of adjectives used to praise: A house should be warm, cheerful, friendly; simple rather than fussy, and pleasantly informal; distinctive, but avoiding eccentricity and cold sophistication. In full-page ads run in several publications a few years back, *Better Homes and Gardens* claimed to have invented the family room, which has now become a nearly indispensable adjunct of a medium-priced house. This informal room, practically appointed for easy upkeep and intended for family activities and relaxed entertaining, fairly typifies the style of life advocated by *Better Homes and Gardens,* and fits perfectly the standards its editors apply to home planning and decorating as well as to cooking, travel, and all other aspects of a family's life.

As down-to-earth in its treatment as *Better Homes and Gardens,* but edited strictly for a West Coast audience, *Sunset* is the successful brainchild of L. W. Lane, trained on the Meredith advertising staff and the first of many *Better Homes and Gardens*

"graduates" to take over key posts on other magazines throughout the country. With a relatively small readership (about 600,000), *Sunset* discourages circulation east of the Rockies and looks for more readers among well-heeled Westerners. As a *Wall Street Journal* report put it, *Sunset* editors "write exclusively for urban Westerners who own their own detached homes valued at $12,000 or more. And they write about travel, cooking, gardening, and homes—nothing else." Within these self-imposed limitations, the magazine is a rich mine of information on West Coast life, on the homes and gardens its "new masses" own—or wish they did—and on the eating and travel choices they approve of. Its aggressive regionalism goes sometimes to absurd lengths, as when it dictates a headline such as "Why We in the West Like Camellias," but it does bring out interesting variations in living patterns.

The style of life reflected in *Sunset's* pages seems on the whole somewhat higher than that of *Better Homes and Gardens*. Regional factors are probably a partial explanation: seafood and avocadoes are obviously more of a staple in the West; a Hawaii vacation is much easier from there; and the weaving of Oriental and contemporary architectural themes, which often gives *Sunset* houses a rather exotic, expensive look, has indeed become a widespread feature of the West's domestic landscape. However, the magazine does convey the impression that its readers are expected to have a somewhat larger income, and greater time and means for leisure, than the average American. Informality and friendliness, which are here again basic values, are on a slightly different level: the difference, say, between a "Tahitian" buffet and a more plebeian barbecue or wiener roast.

If the world of *Sunset* is strictly contemporary—with a Western twang and echoes of the Orient—that of *The American Home*, now owned by Curtis Publications, was until recently very deeply steeped in Early American. Its hallmark could well have been a lavabo made into a planter, or a cobbler's bench used as an end table. The magazine's predilection for the slightly quaint, the self-consciously traditional abated somewhat when a change in editorship, early in 1959, brought about a shift toward a more solid service content. But it still has a strong Early American air, perhaps because

the magazine is oriented toward the suburbanite bent longingly on recapturing some shreds of a past that will give him a feeling of rootedness.

Editor John Carter, another *Better Homes and Gardens* graduate, by way of *Household*, sees his typical readers as a family with children in their early teens, living in a suburban area and owning its home. What is that home supposed to be like? Warmth and friendliness, with touches of a remembered and idealized past, are *The American Home*'s prescription for the kind of environment conducive to the good life.

Living for Young Homemakers, sister publication to *Mademoiselle*, speaks to a more limited and more clearly defined audience: young couples determinedly on their way up but having to reconcile expensive tastes with a fairly limited budget. More than any other home service magazine, *Living* relies on sometimes tricky, inexpensive, but flashy devices to dress up an interior, waiting for a larger income to allow a more substantial décor.

Living's style is much less impersonal than that of *Better Homes and Gardens*. In fact, the editors often speak out in a crusading tone, as when they opened an issue devoted to remodeling by inviting readers to "live up to your looks." The American woman, the editorial said, "often enough . . . looks the glass of fashion on a mighty slim budget, and despite the fact that her favorite dress may be duplicated half a dozen times right down the block, she and her five neighbors never seem a sextet: inspired accessorizing provides the saving shades of difference." And, *Living* added, "a room is like a human being . . . all it requires is becoming raiment"—an easy enough task with "imagination, daring," and *Living*'s help.

If the home service magazines have a real reason for being, we may be getting close to it here. In a society like ours—in which the accoutrements of everyday life are mostly mass-produced, from development houses to mail-order seeds and packaged foods—the saving difference is provided by the individual's selective combination of standard components. In *Better Homes and Gardens* (which calls itself "the family IDEA magazine"), the reader may choose from a wide variety of examples some which possibly apply, or can be adapted, to his own situation. *The American Home* serves the same

function—if within a somewhat narrower scope, both because of more limited space and of its predilection for traditional styles. *Living* and *Sunset* take a more inspirational approach, and they too somewhat restrict the area of choice. But each magazine helps people create out of a series of manufactured objects a more individual environment, just as do-it-yourself provides a bridge between machined parts and a "custom" assembly. The final success, of course, depends on the reader's imaginative resources and skills, but at least these magazines expose him to a variety of alternatives, and make him aware of the possibility of choice.

The magazine which is most enthusiastically devoted to this purpose, ever urging upon its readers the joys of creativity and the enjoyment of the "good life," is *House Beautiful*. Here is editor Elizabeth Gordon's militant program of manners-and-morals education:

> As I watch people struggling to endow their daily lives with significance and beauty, it seems increasingly clear to me that the key to successful living is awareness. It is the insensitive ones who make the mistakes in taste, who serve the tasteless food, who blunder socially. . . . The ones who are alive, who find everything interesting, are the ones who have developed a high degree of awareness. Their homes are always filled with beauty, no matter how low their incomes. . . . The next 36 pages are devoted to showing how you can progress from simple, childlike awareness to dynamic, do-something-about-it awareness. Improving this faculty will create pleasure out of the same stuff of living that you are handling now. What other people have done you can do.

In those thirty-six pages, and in every issue of *House Beautiful*, one finds on the one hand a seemingly genuine, enthusiastic dedication to "awareness," a heightening of individual sensibilities which is "the key to successful living" and makes one's life fuller, more satisfying. *House Beautiful* thus expresses that urge toward individual order and beauty which underlies any genuine effort at creating an esthetically pleasing environment for one's family.

On the other hand, however, *House Beautiful* apparently identifies the good life with not making mistakes in taste, not serving tasteless food, not blundering socially—all desirable things but at best

surface symptoms of one's attitude toward life. As often happens when trying to ascertain motives and to sort them out in neat categories, confusion sets in. Are we supposed to strive toward increased awareness because this is the key to a richer life, or merely because it will help us adjust more successfully to our social group? The answer, both for Elizabeth Gordon and the great majority of *House Beautiful* readers (if not of most Americans), probably lies between the two. Or, rather, successful adjustment to one's own group is considered to be the most important component of the good life, and therefore the two goals are indeed one. This fits in neatly with the standards of warmth, informality, and friendliness which usually guide home service magazine editors.

Whether the main intent is social lubrication or some kind of spiritual development, the fact remains that for the reader exposure to *House Beautiful*—its style of architecture and cooking, gardening and furnishings—is likely to stimulate the imagination and open new possibilities of choice.

More aloof in its enthusiasms than *House Beautiful*—and as sharply dogmatic in its style prescriptions as its sister publications, *Vogue* and *Glamour*—*House & Garden* is in some ways the *Living* of those who already are well on their way to "success." Striking effects here are seldom achieved inexpensively—costly furniture and accessories are standard for its interiors—but there is a similar search for the boldly different, for drama in the home, sometimes bordering on the bizarre.

Every home service magazine, of course, is to a certain extent committed to a constant search for the new, in foods or home decoration or gardening, even if the novelty consists of some kind of return to the old. But this can be done in different ways. *House Beautiful*, for instance, usually attempts to assess new developments in the light of what the magazine reverently refers to as the Wrightian tradition, even though this may require some stretching of principles and facts. *House & Garden* lacks this kind of ideological commitment; it is more eclectic and at the same time more intransigent in reaching for a bold visual statement or a new "idea." A revealing, if somewhat unfair, example was an issue which heralded with great

fanfare the coming of a "new room"—a rather frightening combination of garage and living room that fortunately never found much favor even among the bravest novelty seekers in the land.

In *House & Garden* as in *House Beautiful* do-it-yourself has a very marginal place—except in gardening and cooking, or an occasional craftsman's project. Most other matters, apparently, might just as well be left to the traditional handyman. While the other four home service magazines devote much attention to utilitarian tasks such as painting a room, fixing the plumbing, or building something, *House & Garden* and *House Beautiful* tend to concern themselves more with gourmet foods, hostess chores, wine choices. Gardening, however, long accepted as a respectable hobby, is an important editorial category.

How closely does the editors' image of their audience correspond to the actual people who buy or subscribe to a magazine? To what extent does a magazine influence its readers? A non-traveler might easily curl up with Paul Bowles' description of Paris in *Holiday*, but would anyone read how to fix ceiling cracks in *Better Homes and Gardens*, or how to prepare a party buffet in *House Beautiful*, unless the reader at least considered undertaking such projects? There is a gap, of course, between aspirations and reality, and each home service magazine keeps forever ahead of its readers in terms of both style and income. But the gap can't be too wide, and this is quite apparent in the merchandising programs of the various magazines, in the model homes sponsored throughout the country by several of them, and in the many advertising tie-ins which would probably be discontinued if they proved ineffective. A survey of consumer choices of colors made by Sears, Roebuck & Co., on which I reported elsewhere,[4] indicated a close relationship between magazine trends and actual demand at the retail level and could be interpreted as evidence that home service magazines do affect reader choices, at least in minor areas such as the selection of paint colors.

An interesting footnote to the question of magazine influence can be found in Robert Woods Kennedy's *The House and the Art of Its Design*. Drawing upon his experience as an architect and dis-

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[4]"Notes on the Family Room," *Discourse* (October, 1958).

cussions with colleagues, Mr. Kennedy remarks that, while at the very top of the socio-economic scale home service magazines have little or no effect on values, most other families use them extensively as source material or as actual shopping guides, often picking out a specific house from their pages. Lower-income families, on the other hand, apparently read them only to get hints and ideas, and this seems borne out by some preliminary findings by a sociologist conducting a study in a large, predominantly blue-collar housing development on the East Coast. The impact of the magazines, he wrote in a letter after a number of interviews, was slim: "People say that they have gotten specific ideas for Christmas decorations or other minor aspects of house-use from them; very few say that the magazines have really structured the appearance of, and the furnishing of, their house for them. . . . The magazines are a sort of reference book and source of impulsive ideas for small changes, but not much more."

If the home service magazines do have an effect on the styles of living of a large segment of American society—excluding the very top and bottom—we ought to attempt now an evaluation of that influence and of the fields in which it works.

The explicit ethical statement, we found, is practically nonexistent. An occasional article, rather self-consciously referred to as a "think" piece, will touch upon a major theme, such as race relations. The writer will be on the side of the angels, preaching tolerance and understanding—but always within a safe context, which allows an easy and harmonious resolution. It might be, for instance, the story of an Oriental family moving into a previously "exclusive" neighborhood and causing some excitement until some well-meaning neighbors take the lead in making the newcomers feel welcome. There is no unpleasant sharpness to the way the problem is presented, and the conclusion always stresses the positive, outdoing Pollyanna in cheerful hopefulness. The result, one fears, is to further the readers' complacent confusion. By ignoring political conflict and by glossing over real contrasts between racial or religious groups, or divergent economic interests, the magazine's bland moral preaching may actually help shut out of the reader's awareness the larger world around one's home and garden.

While talking about the family room with a very urban friend

who had not known of its widespread popularity throughout the country, he remarked: "It's like a cave for people afraid of The Bomb." The thought is intriguing. Bewildered and doubtful of their power to influence in the least the complex world around them, people huddle around the fire glowing in the fireplace—or the barbecue pit—and look for the small, comforting certainties of home. There is perhaps something in this image to suggest a close connection between two of the most striking characteristics of the home service magazine world, at first sight unrelated: the muting of political and social consciousness on the one hand, and on the other a genuine concern with the expression of creativeness and individuality in the home. But before attempting to formulate what is at best a suggestive generalization, let us summarize briefly the main assets and liabilities of home service magazines.

There is no doubt that by providing nationwide models they encourage some homogenization of taste and further that coast-to-coast sameness which so worries many social critics. It is also true that a constant search for novelty, and the need for providing editorial support for advertisers, are likely to result in silly fads and in the artificial stimulation of marginal wants. On the other hand, these magazines do help develop individual competence and creativeness, showing how to use more intelligently what mass production makes available, taking full advantage of the ready made and still achieving a somewhat individualized result. It may be a special topping for a cake baked from a prepared mix. It may be a piece of furniture designed to combine a flush door and some other standard components. In each case, the reader sees possible new choices and is thus encouraged to use his imagination in striving for a more satisfying home environment.

What began in an editorial office as a practical matter—providing guidance to improve house and garden—thus takes on an ethical dimension. The important thing is not really that the house *be* beautiful, or at least not that alone. The *process* of making it so is what counts most. The editors are not training a generation of interior decorators, but they are helping people develop a keener awareness of esthetic factors in their home lives, and a greater taste competence in the bewildering consumer world opened to them by relative affluence. The good life means learning to discriminate among pos-

sible alternatives and to chart an individual course while taking full advantage of the mass produced.

Starting at home is a small beginning, but perhaps within the short compass of one's family and circle of friends one can find a place to belong and a satisfying feeling of individual identity. A backyard barbecue is no town meeting, but building an outdoor fireplace and then fixing a special meal may be better preparation for intelligent participation in society than many sour critics of the suburbs are ready to admit: because inserting oneself in social life as a person among other persons is different from losing one's self in a mass, bound together by common dependence on an outside object of worship or source of authority. It is different mainly in that it requires self-respect and an adult sense of individual worth. This the home service magazines cannot teach in one, ten, or a hundred easy lessons. They can, however, help equip the individual to deal more creatively with his immediate environment. They can put within his reach the possibility of measurable accomplishment, a rare thing in these days of assembly lines and ubiquitous, anonymous teamwork. They can teach him consumer skills which he needs to master his possessions and to hold his own with others in a society where abundance is making money less important than knowing how to spend it. Pursuing the good life according to their modest lights, he probably won't set forth on any quixotic quest. But he may ready himself for a mature adjustment to the larger society beyond his home and yard, having found in his small suburban Walden a measure of human fulfillment.

The Glass Boy

By MARNIE POMEROY

He looked at every shiny place
In vain to know himself. His face
Reflected ghostly-dark, then queer—
Pinched or wide—then silver-clear.

In spoons a grin bobbed upside down.
On bowls a miniature clown
Slid by. A milk-white dolly head
On china platters imp'd, then fled.

Window panes around the room
Glazed the tea-time in the gloom;
His nightly self at dinner-time
Hung there in goblin pantomime.

He peeped at puddle-underland
Where black trees grew in skies of sand,
And met through portholes of the street
His future shade about his feet.

The pocket mirror winked surprise
When it could trap his startled eyes.
The full one mimicked him with death—
His liquid length without his breath.

MARNIE POMEROY grew up near Millbrook, New York. Following graduation from Sarah Lawrence College, she spent three and a half years in Europe before temporarily settling in New York City. Her poems have appeared in English and American publications.

Though This Be Madness

By IRENE JERISON

■ Day rises late in December in the Polish city of Lodz. When Wanda and I stepped out of Number Forty Zgierska Street, the ghetto, swathed in blackout, was completely dark. The corset factory where we both worked was just a squat, bulky shape, though it lay to our left on the other side of the street only a few hundred yards away as the crow flies. In the ghetto, however, one couldn't follow the flight of a crow.

Zgierska Street stretched for some miles directly through the center of the vast barbed wire cage that was the ghetto. Since Zgierska was the main northbound thoroughfare of the city, the Germans could not include it in our prison without disrupting the flow of north-south traffic. To permit the inhabitants of the ghetto to come into direct contact with the Aryans in the vehicle traffic would have defeated the purpose of the cage. And so the Germans cut the ghetto in half. They stretched barbed wire fences along both sides of Zgierska, separating the sidewalks from the roadway. City traffic moved briskly in the street, forbidden to stop. Inhabitants of the ghetto walked slowly along the narrow sidewalks, getting from one side of the ghetto to the other across a wooden bridge which had been suspended over an important intersection, where Zgierska met Church Street.

Thus, instead of heading across the street, Wanda and I turned south toward the bridge, its heavy shadow barely visible high over the street at the far end of the block. Snow was falling softly. It

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blurred the figure of the German sentry who stood, as usual, somewhere beyond the wire fence edging the sidewalk.

"S'ist dunkel, nicht wahr?"

The startling clarity of the sentry's voice, coming from behind the scrim of snow, froze us both into immobility.

"*J-j-aa,*" Wanda's answer wafted out tremulously on a cloud of breath. Indeed it was a dark morning.

The sentry was silent. Tentatively, we moved on, surprised that our shaking legs would carry us. After two years' imprisonment in the ghetto, we took the sentry's presence for granted, but a sentry making conversation was unheard of.

Once out of his earshot, I made an anxious comment, "Now what do you suppose . . . ?"

Wanda didn't let me finish. As so often happened, she knew what I had in mind and had her answer ready. "He felt like talking this morning. That's all. Even SS-men sometimes do, you know. It makes sense."

I didn't argue this time. Wanda and I had been friends for most of our fifteen years, and I knew her well. Wanda had an orderly mind. She always tried to apply to her life the kind of elegant logic that had given her joy in her introduction to geometry in the undercover school we had both attended throughout its brief existence. In geometry, given certain axioms, *A* followed *B*, which, in turn, invariably led to *C*. *Quod erat demonstrandum*. It made beautiful sense. If she tried hard enough, Wanda was sure that she could explain everything around her in such sensible terms. A German's remark. Or even the ghetto. Even, perhaps, the absurdity of the bridge, which seemed to sway ahead of us under the weight of the slow-moving crowd on top.

"Look at it," I said to Wanda with a touch of amazement in my voice, as if I had never seen the bridge before. To me the bridge would always be absurd and infinitely more baffling than Euclid's theorems, which I had found baffling enough. I knew, however, that we must cross it to get to work. I also knew how slow and slippery the crossing would be over the ragged crust of snow. But we must reach the factory by seven, for being late to work in the ghetto meant a cut in the next food ration. We quickened our pace.

Both of us reached the corner of Zgierska and Church Street

out of breath. Wanda grabbed the railing at the approach to the bridge and bent over it, coughing and gasping. I watched her as we swayed, caught in a mass of people slithering slowly, like a huge, clumsy snake, toward the bridge stairs. Wanda had been coughing for some time, and I was worried about her. In the ghetto, a young girl's persistent cough had only one meaning. Disease raced the Nazis for trophies, especially tuberculosis among the young. Only a quick end of the war could save us from both in time.

While the human snake pushed us ahead almost imperceptibly, Wanda's cough subsided. Inching up double file, trampling our way across, and stumbling down on the other side, Wanda and I caught snatches of frightening news.

"A man was shot to death on Wròbla Street during the night," we heard someone say, and a moment later, "Have you heard about that Jewish policeman?" "Unconscious. . . ." "Bullet in his back. . . ." "The Germans are shooting all over the ghetto near the wires. . . ."

How like the Germans, I thought with panic. For two years they had let us move about the ghetto without incident. Now suddenly the sentries were firing at passers-by within sight of their border posts. The only method one could count on in the Nazis' dealings with us was that there was no method. If *A* had preceded *B* for some time, one could be almost sure that it would not continue doing so. The question was when the change would occur, in what way, or whether, perhaps, this time there would be no change at all. And the uncertainty was what, to me, defied all speculation. Not so to Wanda.

"Now why?" she asked, when able to speak again, "why would they do this? There must be a reason. There must be something that is making them nervous right now. But what?"

We had stepped off the last of the bridge stairs. We walked down Church Street to a small side street parallel to the wire-bordered Zgierska. We would enter the factory through a back door.

I interrupted her musing with the only question that mattered to me at the moment. "How are we going to get back home?" I asked, rhetorically to be sure.

Wanda seized on the question, more, it seemed, to allay her own fears than to supply a solution.

"I wish they would make a passage through that back wall into

the alley," she sighed. "God knows, they have talked about it enough."

Zgierska Street presented a solid front of tenements, each with a cavernous gate opening out into the street. Each building was a closed unit, consisting of three right-angle wings of flats built around a cobblestone courtyard, the fourth side of the rectangle usually being a high brick wall. In most buildings, the gate onto Zgierska provided the only exit, but in several, the rear brick wall had been partly dismantled, thus opening the courtyards to an alley that ran the length of the block and out to Church Street. In that way, the inhabitants of Zgierska were able to avoid walking the fenced length of their street to the bridge. But when Wanda and I started for work that morning, the brick wall at Number Forty had still been intact.

"I really don't see," Wanda continued, "why people take such unnecessary risks. The wall could have been torn down any time for two years now. If there were a passage, we would never have to walk next to the wires and the sentries, only in the interior of the ghetto. We all know the Germans well enough to realize that it is wiser to stay out of their sight—that makes sense. But no—we keep walking by the wires until they get it into their heads to shoot at us, and by then it is too late, of course. There just isn't any logic in that."

"You and your logic," I burst out. "There isn't any logic anywhere, only madness. We are, all of us, insane, locked up in a crazy place!"

" 'Though this be madness yet there's method in't.' " Proudly, Wanda quoted her favorite lines from the English lessons we were taking together with a private teacher.

"But Hamlet was not the ghetto," I contradicted. I saw madness in everything about us. That the Nazis were mad went without saying. But we were no better. There was madness in studying English inside a sealed prison or in enjoying Euclid's geometry; madness in seeking logic in every situation while being consumed by a deadly disease; and madness, right now, in continuing to walk toward the factory to avoid a cut in a food ration one might not get back home to collect.

Yet, of course, we didn't turn back. We reached the plant just before the deadline. The place buzzed with anxious whispers, each wilder than the previous one, each as hard to believe as to dismiss. Our worry mounted as the morning wore on.

But towards noon, Wanda, who had been sent to the front office on an errand, brought a different piece of news to the workshop. She ran in, her cheeks bright pink and eyes flashing.

"The Americans are in at last, the Americans are with us!" she shouted, making her way among rows of sewing machines toward the work table. "The Americans are at war!" She sank into her chair, beaming.

The room became suddenly quiet as the rumor seeped in slowly, until the supervisor reluctantly broke the silence. "All right, girls, back to work."

Over the renewed clatter of sewing machines, a hum of excited voices broke out, weaving bright hopespun visions. Nobody questioned the authenticity of the news. Rumor was the ghetto's newspaper, radio, and town crier, and we tended to accept it all. We had learned from experience to believe all bad news. Good news, on the other hand, we needed to believe to go on living.

"You see, you see," Wanda whispered, "that explains it. That's why they are shooting. They are furious—and I hope they stay that way. It's a good sign. They won't have the opportunity to be furious much longer. . . ."

I was more skeptical. There had been signs before. The ghetto was always as full of portents as the streets of Rome that night before the Ides of March, though rarely did subsequent events bear out the omens. But I kept my doubts to myself. After all, unlike Wanda, I wasn't coughing yet.

"Now, with the United States in the war," Wanda said, "this whole thing will be over in no time—and do you know what I'll do first thing? I'll go away some place where there is no snow and no bridges. And no barbed wires, not anywhere around. . . ."

The Americans were in. The shootings had a reason. The war would be over any day now. Wanda's face glowed with those life-giving visions even when the supervisor came close and interrupted her reverie. "I've just been told," the older woman said curtly, "that any of you living next to the wires should go home immediately."

Wanda was silent as we left the factory, her face dull and gray again, her ghetto face. In fact, neither of us said one word during all of that long walk through quiet, snowy streets, almost empty now even in the safe interior of the ghetto. It had stopped snowing and turned colder. The closer we came to the bridge, the fewer people

we met. Those who did have business outdoors passed by swiftly, anxiously, usually alone. We turned into Church Street. Before us, the structure of the bridge described a jagged pattern against the now cloudless sky. The only person in sight on the ghetto side of the wires was a motionless Jewish policeman on guard near the stairs. He let us pass without a sign of either assurance or warning. We approached the slippery wooden steps, then climbed to the top. No crowd checked our progress this time. We crossed the bridge very slowly, all the time looking down to the right where almost a block away stood the building numbered Forty.

The street spreading underneath was ablaze with icy sunshine. Everything was blinding bright: the sapphire canopy of sky, the crystal whiteness of snow on empty sidewalks, the silver tapes of streetcar tracks. Even the dirty gray tenements reflected the sun with glaring sharpness. Their gates were closed now—all except that distant one which we recognized as Number Forty. A triangular steel-blue shadow on the snow in front of the house showed the gap in the façade of the building where Wanda and I would find safety if we reached it. Across the sidewalk from the open gate, on the other side of the wires, a dirty spot in the snow marked the path traced by the sentry. There was a similar dirty patch in the snow under the bridge, on the side we were approaching, where another German sentry was posted. He was standing now with his legs apart, his head turned up, watching us walk across the bridge and finally down its steps.

We were on the bottom stair. Now we turned to the right, unwillingly but with determination. There was nothing else we could do, no other way to get home but along the empty sidewalk, past the two watchful Germans, and all the time within an arm's reach of those wire fences that had, within the last few hours, become so dangerous. Presently, an old woman, with a shabby shawl over her head, ran toward us, dragging her feet. She wailed something unintelligible in passing. But we didn't even slow down. All our attention was centered on that fateful strip of sidewalk which drew closer and closer, on which we now were.

Wanda, the taller, was closer to the buildings; I walked on her right, almost brushing against the wires. Without looking, I knew that the sentry under the bridge was watching us. Wanda must have

felt it too. But we both stared ahead, heads high, backs straight. Only a block separated us from the half-open gate. Behind it was shelter. But between us and its safety were the quiet buildings, their locked gates facing us. There was the merciless brightness of snow, in which our dark-coated silhouettes made perfect targets to the two Germans. And there was the silence of the street, in which the squeak of snow under feet doubled, tripled, multiplied in volume, until it blared in the imagination like the blast of thousands of trumpets. A streetcar rattled by in the road, momentarily drowning out the sound of our footsteps. But it passed, and we marched on, two perfectly coordinated robots, evenly, rhythmically, while the snow squeaked, screeched, screamed under our feet.

We passed two store fronts, a gate, another store. House Number Twenty-four was now behind us, then Twenty-six, some more earshattering steps, and we passed number Twenty-eight. Thirty, Thirty-two, Thirty-four. The gate was drawing closer, and with it the menacing figure of the German across the sidewalk from it. Thirty-six, Thirty-eight. We were there. Only the width of sidewalk between us and home. Now we would turn left, quietly, unconcernedly, and we would be inside. . . .

"*Zurrück!* Back!" The command was given by a soldier, in a soldier's voice, and so, like soldiers, we turned on our heels and began marching back as evenly as before, the snow screeching once more. Now it was only a matter of aiming, of timing. Number Thirty-eight, Thirty-six, Thirty-four. Of the two figures, I was closer to the gunman, but Wanda was taller. One couldn't tell who would be first. I was hardly aware of her at my side, so preoccupied was I with the enormous bulk of my body as it must appear in the sight of the rifle. My head went up higher. My back straightened to ramrod stiffness. In its center there was a small burning spot, a cradle awaiting the bullet. It ached in expectation. I listened for the German to raise his rifle behind me and take an easy aim. But my feet kept moving in that same even step, and no crack of shot penetrated the squeak of the snow. The spot in my back burned on. Number Twenty-six, Twenty-four.

There again was the bridge intersection. Instinctively, I made a right turn away from it and into Church Street, then a sharp right again into that back alley behind the Zgierska courtyards. I was

running now, stumbling and slipping, though out of reach of either sentry's bullets. I came to the wall that had blocked the alley from our courtyard only that morning. Now bricks lay scattered on both sides, and there was a sizable opening in the middle. I stopped short, then turned, pointing to the passage.

Wanda was far behind. She was walking very slowly, as if the mechanism that had propelled her feet before were giving out. She reached the pile of bricks and lowered herself onto them, doubling up in a fit of coughing. I sank down next to her, staring at the snow at her feet, where, inexplicably, a bright red splotchy pattern was forming amid the white.

"Wanda," I gasped. "Wanda, what is this? He didn't hit you, did he. . . .? Answer me. . . . He didn't hit you. . . . I heard no shot. . . ."

She shook her head, unable to speak. I sat staring in slow understanding, as Wanda's coughing stopped, and with it the trickle of blood that had run between the fingers over her mouth, down her boots, and into the snow below. Still bent over from the attack, Wanda gazed at the red splotches, trying to speak between gasps for control over her lungs and heart.

"Running in the cold . . . excitement . . . makes you cough. . . . Makes sense. . . ."

I shivered. Out of nowhere, yet for a reason, I thought of the Americans. The Americans, hence the shooting. The shooting and yet no bullet. No bullet, but blood in the snow. A screaming snow—the utter madness. My feet were numb. I was suddenly very cold. We must go in and shake the snow off our feet, I thought. I stood up and fiercely kicked the snow together around the red patch, until only crumpled whiteness showed. Wanda, also standing now, wiped the blood off her mouth. She stuffed her stained gloves into her coat pockets.

"Come on," she said in a flat voice. "Let's go in and tell them about the Americans."

The King's Language: Shakespeare's Drama as Social Discovery

By SIGURD BURCKHARDT

■ My aim in what follows is to interpret seven of Shakespeare's plays in a way that will reveal an inner logic in the development of his dramatic poetry. I do not find this logic in archetypal myths nor in conceptual antinomies such as appearance and reality or will and reason; I find it in what, for the poet, is a stubbornly concrete substance: language. As I read them, the plays testify to Shakespeare's gradual, and painful, discovery of his medium and thereby of his own true function and powers.

I must begin with some cursory remarks about that most slippery of words: truth. The condition a statement has to meet to be called true is commonly conceived to be simple: a true statement is one which corresponds to the matter of fact it purports to describe. But truth is, of course, much more complex than this. There is, for example, the automatically true statement, which institutes or creates the corresponding matter of fact—as when a sovereign declares his country to be at war with another. The trouble with statements of this sort is that, being automatically true, they are not really true at all; where the possibility of error or falsehood is ruled out *a priori*, truth has no meaning. A second kind of statement which shows that

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truth is no simple one-to-one relation is the equivocation. Iseult's oath of fidelity, made good by God though it was, was not a truth, since it was meant to be misinterpreted by her listeners. (And in the end God sees to it that the balance is righted: though Iseult has, by equivocation, saved her pretty hands from burning, she loses lover and life by the black-for-white lie of her namesake, Iseult of the White Hands.) Truth, then, is at least a three-way relation, a correspondence of fact, statement, and understanding. It takes two to tell the truth as well as to quarrel; truth has a social dimension.

A poet may, of course, claim to speak creatively, to give an airy nothing a local habitation and a name. But since he lacks the authority which alone can give this claim objective force, his airy nothings remain in or, after their brief hour upon the stage, revert to their original state: breath, a slight commotion of the air, is all they are. This is all right as long as the poet is satisfied with being an entertainer; the applause of his audience vindicates his enterprise. But—a good deal of "hard-boiled" Shakespeare criticism notwithstanding—Shakespeare was more ambitious; the man who wrote, "The play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King," and who claimed for his magic that it enabled "all of us to find ourselves when no man was his own," had grander designs.

But if the poet ascends, or descends, to the level of ordinary speech and subjects himself to the normal criteria of truth, he encounters other difficulties. Modern criticism has made us wary of considering even a lyric poem the direct, personal utterance of the poet; poems have been described as verbal icons and hypothetical verbal structures; they have even been called "mute," "dumb," and "wordless." A play is clearly no direct utterance; we have no warrant to accept anything said in it as the poet's personal communication to us. It may be considered—as it often has been—a replica of life; but the imitation theory leads to endless difficulties, especially with Shakespeare; and again there is ample reason to think that Shakespeare himself did not subscribe to it. In what sense, then, can a poem be true? That is to say, what matter of fact does it state in such a way that purport and understanding coincide? I hope to show that for Shakespeare the matter of fact to which poetry must be true, and through which it and the poet remain indissolubly tied to the social order, is language itself.

In every dialogue the social order is a silent but essential partner; the simplest remark presupposes two analogously structured habit systems, and consequently the faith that the social order is coherent and pervasive enough to have instilled the same habits in the listener as in the speaker. In a radical sense, therefore, all speech is question-begging: it presupposes the community which it pretends to establish. One can imagine a social order so fully and rigorously articulated that language atrophies into a mere system of vocal signals (armies tend toward being such orders); on the other hand, where the social order has its boundaries, linguistic boundaries will develop which in time will become barriers, while within the order itself the need for a standard language is felt as strongly as that for a standard currency.

The fact that the social order acts as the ultimate mediator and therefore is directly involved in the speaking of truth (in the tri-cornered sense I have defined) has grave implications. For there can then be no truth without it, and yet the order itself may be a perversion. Or again, as long as truth and justice simply echo each other, with no possibility of recourse from one to the other, they may become a perfect but empty tautology, compelled to deny legitimate human aspirations, because to admit them would endanger the order's stability. Finally, if the order disintegrates, language is likely to disintegrate with it. Shakespeare's plays, in their progress, are explorations of these various possibilities and of their consequences for the poet.

Next to "To be or not to be," the best known and most quoted lines from Shakespeare are Juliet's great nominalist protest against the bondage of "names," i.e., of words. Sure of the ability of two true lovers to establish a lasting union, Juliet sees in the social order—or in its precipitate, the linguistic one—only a system of unnatural barriers, imposing a deadening fixity upon experience and feeling; she rebels—as we all do—against the arbitrariness of usage and tradition which forces us into categories when we want to be, and are sure we could be, simply and truly ourselves. The Rousseauistic yearning for a state of nature, from which we could construct a new, better, and more natural order, for the poet assumes a verbal form: if he could be the Baptist, the name-giver, he would at once be free of

the falsifying restraints of the existing language and have a clear and splendid function as the man who renders communion possible.

But this, of course, is idle dreaming, and Shakespeare loses no time exposing it:

> What man art thou that thus bescreen'd by night
> So stumblest on my counsels?

Juliet cries in fright when Romeo addresses her, and insists on identifying him by the name she has just implored him to doff. Accosted in the dark, she does not find it reassuring that the speaker has hands, feet, and any other part belonging to a man; what she needs to know is the "who" of the matter, and for that words are indispensable. Nor only for that. What is the love of these lovers but a gorgeous outpouring of words, an insatiable delight in the beloved "name"?

> Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
> Else would I tear the cave where Echo lies,
> And make his airy tongue more hoarse than mine
> With repetition of my Romeo's name.

This is confusing: Echo is to be made hoarse with repeating the name which Juliet, because of her bondage *to names*, is too hoarse to shout. We begin to suspect that Shakespeare, like Juliet, wants to have it both ways.

Romeo and Juliet is, as Shakespearean tragedies go, a "clean" one (to borrow a term from our atomic weaponeers); it has a symmetry which, even though it is a symmetry of conflict, is comforting. Montagues and Capulets oppose each other, but they are held as in a frame by the larger, overarching order of church and state. The aspirations of the lovers are in full harmony with the interests of this larger order; the disharmony is not intrinsic but accidental. The word is consequently both good and evil; it is, on the one hand, the "airy word" which has bred strife between the families, and on the other the "holy word" by which the Friar joins the lovers and hopes to end the discord. So that finally we are left with the sense that the lovers' misfortune is a private one, arising not from the order of things, but from a concatenation of private quarrels and ill-starred circumstances. The two are what Capulet calls them, "poor sacrifices"; the closing reconciliation has a certain patness. Shakespeare

has raised a problem and then evaded it; the ambiguity of the word "bond" is not fully confronted and so not satisfactorily resolved.

For all its appearance of conventional comedy plotting, *The Merchant of Venice* (written probably within a year of *Romeo and Juliet*) is a far more searching treatment of the problem. That the play ends happily rather than tragically is due to the judgment of Portia; and what renders this judgment noteworthy is that it is not a decree by which authority arbitrarily decides the issue in favor of goodness, nor a victoriously eloquent appeal to human feeling, but rather an interpretation showing that the most literal and rigorous acceptance of the bond will serve the ends of humanity.

This interpretation is not easily come by; in fact, the body of the play is devoted to drawing the saving Portia into the action. In the judgment scene, "bond" becomes so potently the vehicle of Shylock's malice that we are in danger of forgetting how it was this very bond that enabled Bassanio to court Portia and so has brought her to the seat of justice; what threatens to destroy Antonio is also the source of his deliverance. But not only Antonio is delivered; the state likewise is saved from itself. For until Portia's appearance, the state is caught in the fearful dilemma of having to sanction a fiendish injustice in order that justice may be done. The order, for all its good will, is self-defining and circular; justice is what the law says, and the voice of humanity cannot penetrate into this closed system. The fine speeches about the quality of mercy fall upon deaf ears or enter impotent hearts. But the bond has, through the venture of Antonio's love, released the energy which in the end transforms the vicious circle into a ring of love.

Read in this way, the play becomes a paradigm of the poet's ideal relation to the social order. Recognizing that, because his medium is language, he is not nor ever can be a free creator, the poet acknowledges his bondedness, his dependency upon the order for that means of exchange which is peculiarly his to manage and which he makes available so that men may enter into the free and personal communion of love. And it is this love, in turn, which can renew and revitalize the order, preserving it from the deadly rigor of automatic self-definition. Perhaps this interpretation can draw some support from being able to resolve the old critical problem of how we are to

take Shylock. Our ambivalent feelings about him are by no means merely anachronistic responses, derived from attitudes toward Jews which were alien to Shakespeare's audience. They rest, on the contrary, firmly on the text, especially on the famous "I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes?" and so forth. The fact is that Antonio has treated Shylock with the haughty, indeed brutal, contempt of one who is beyond all "use and usances," who gives freely of his substance and thus sees himself as standing above that order which the Jew must rely on. The Jew is under the law; but the Christian's notion of being beyond it, far too easy and self-righteous, furnishes Shylock with a very real eloquence.

What Shakespeare discovers in *The Merchant of Venice* is nothing less than a new principle of order. Symmetry, though easiest to come by, is always dangerous, because it is dichotomous. *The Merchant of Venice*, unlike *Romeo and Juliet*, is ordered in ring form; the high-spirited last act, which, after the essential business of the plot seems over and done with, plays jubilantly about the ring, celebrates this discovery. For it is much more than merely an esthetic one. I don't think the suggestion extravagant that through this resolution of the paradox of his "bond," Shakespeare released the joyful creative energy of the great romantic comedies; they are, we might say, Antonio's "argosies." Finding that he is not exempt from "use," he at the same time finds a true social function; his word is now "in circulation."

But *The Merchant of Venice* still rests on faith: faith in the basic justice and stability of the state. At the beginning of what is called Shakespeare's tragic period, this faith is shattered, and the poet begins to explore the desperate consequences of the state's disintegration or corruption.

Julius Caesar presents disintegration as it occurs: the daggers that rend Caesar's body rend the body politic. And language, thus deprived of its support, acts strangely and destructively. Brutus and Antony are not merely opposite characters; they use language differently. Brutus the Stoic relies on a kind of disembodied truth and on men's natural reason; he thinks it a simple matter to bring the two together, and once they are brought together, he cannot conceive of their being separated. Justice and truth, for him, do not reside in the

state and in language, but beyond them, free of contingency and circumstance. He acts and speaks accordingly; with a bloodless and inhuman logic ("And in the spirit of men there is no blood") he dissects the living, integral man and gives each separate part its separate due: "As Caesar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him; but, as he was ambitious, I slew him."

Antony's deadliness is of a different sort; it is bloodily corporeal. To him the death of Caesar means no return to a more natural order, but chaos with its horror and its opportunity. He makes himself the very voice of Caesar's gashes:

> Over thy wounds now do I prophesy,
> Which, like dumb mouths, do ope their ruby lips
> To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue. . . .
> Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
> Shall cumber all the parts of Italy.

Truth and justice have become empty sounds; language, like the money of Caesar's legacy, is now merely a means, to be seized and used by the strongest.

The recoil upon the poet is immediate. Two poets appear in the play, in two brief and seemingly inconsequential scenes. Cinna, who has the ill fortune to be namesake to one of Caesar's murderers, is halted by a mob and lynched. Vainly he protests: "I am Cinna the poet, I am Cinna the poet!" The reply is brutal and to the purpose: "It is no matter, his name's Cinna. Pluck but his name out of his heart, and turn him going." This is not only the bloody stupidity of the rabble but, in the most literal sense, poetic justice. With the social order no longer there to mediate, language deteriorates into the disembodied and the crudely physical: the realm in which words have no substance, so that they readily join in repellent conjunctions ("I, that did love Caesar when I struck him"), and the realm where words are mere physical substance, so that Cinna is Cinna, and there's an end. The poet, who, relying on the stability of the order, has played his games with language, now is killed by a pun.

The other, nameless poet is not killed; he is brushed aside as a futile prattler. He breaks into the tent where Brutus and Cassius have just composed their quarrel and admonishes them, in hackneyed rhymes, to be friends. For Shakespeare, the time is past when poets

could claim a public function by rhyming political commonplaces into Mirrors for Magistrates and Schools of Princes; as Brutus says: "I'll know his humour when he knows his time. What should the wars do with these jiggling fools?" Long before this, Shakespeare had discovered a profounder and truer function for poetry; if we recall how Portia became its embodiment in the social order of Venice, we will not miss the more than merely personal weight of Brutus' "Portia's dead." It is a different Portia, to be sure, but so was Cinna a different Cinna and yet was killed. For Shakespeare, it's not in dreams but in names that responsibilities begin.

In *Hamlet* the body politic is corrupted more slowly and insidiously, by poison—administered through the *ear*. What we see in the play is the gradual working of this poison—most directly on Hamlet's mind, but through it on the entire court, innocent and guilty alike, until in the final scene it breaks into open virulence on the point of swords. And the pollution of the order presents itself to Hamlet in the form not merely of murder, but of incest. To apply the terms of my interpretation: in a perverted order the union of language and authority is incestuous, one lying (in the punning senses of the word) with the other in an unholy embrace. The discovery that this is so is both paralyzing and dangerous to the poet.

The paralysis of Hamlet's will is the most famous crux in criticism. A generation ago it led T. S. Eliot to formulate the doctrine of the objective correlative; he saw the crux as evidence of Shakespeare's inability to find an adequate embodiment for Hamlet's (and also his own) emotions. But it strikes me as improbable that a play which has engaged audiences and readers so fully and for so long a time as *Hamlet* has should have, for its mainspring, a flagging of poetic invention. It seems more plausible to think of the paralysis as the consequence of a new awareness; with Eliot, Hamlet might have said: "After such knowledge, what forgiveness?"

I believe we ought to be more puzzled than critics usually have been by Hamlet's failure, or refusal, to see the murder of Claudius as a political act. The question of succession, which is implicitly at issue, is the most important political question in monarchies, and Shakespeare himself had so treated it many times over. Claudius speaks of Hamlet as the heir apparent, as do Laertes and Polonius; but Hamlet fixes with seemingly obstinate blindness upon the purely

private aspects of the revenge. In this he stands in sharp contrast to both Laertes and Fortinbras; the former particularly does not hesitate to make his private quarrel a public cause. Not once does Hamlet, in his self-searching and self-admonitions, try to draw resolution from the manifest truth that Denmark is ruled by a criminal usurper, and that he himself is not only a man personally wronged but also the legitimate heir, to whose succession the wronged state has as much right as he himself.

Eliot may well be right in surmising that "Hamlet's bafflement . . . is a prolongation of the bafflement of his creator in the face of his artistic problem." My only *caveat* would be against the word "artistic." The poet has moved close to the center of sovereignty and shrinks back in disgust and fear, because language—by which and through which he must exercise this sovereignty—is incestuously tied to the corrupt order and thus involves him in its corruption. His ideal function—the standing surety to those immediate personal unions through which the order is continually regenerated—is no longer fulfillable; his voice is now necessarily a public one, as Laertes explains to Ophelia:

> He may not, as unvalued persons do,
> Carve for himself, for on his choice depends
> The sanity and health of the whole state;
> And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
> Unto the voice and yielding of that body
> Whereof he is the head. Then, if he says he loves you,
> It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
> As he in his particular act and phrase
> May give his saying deed; which is no further
> Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.

But the main voice of Denmark being Claudius', speech for Hamlet is almost always divisive; words are beaten into swords. They are hooks to catch the conscience of the king, daggers to enter the queen's ear. They are ineffectual in prayer but of marvellous force in cursing; even in self-communion and toward Ophelia they are all edge: "You are keen, my lord, you are keen." One of the oddest passages in the play is Hamlet's answer to Gertrude's contrite question: "What shall I do?" (III.iv) "Not this, by no means, that I bid you do," he replies and then, in loathsome detail, bids her betray his

secret to the king. Why the elaborate double negative? Because language draws its force and urgency from the representation of what is sordid, "rank," "stew'd in corruption"; so that good is a negation of evil, rather than evil a deficiency of good. "Custom" has this potential of negative goodness; though it is "damned" and "monstrous," though it transforms drunkard Danes into beasts and hardens grave-diggers into insensibility (elsewhere in Shakespeare, "customer" means "whore"), yet

> That monster custom, who all sense doth eat
> Of habits evil, is angel yet in this,
> That to the use of actions fair and good
> He likewise gives a frock and livery,
> That aptly is put on.

Despairing, therefore, of the very possibility of love and truth, Hamlet bids Ophelia go into the nunnery—meaning either a convent or a brothel—into a purity that is merely sterile or into a vile and venal promiscuity. (Isabella, heroine of the later *Measure for Measure*, has followed Hamlet's command; she has opted for untainted sterility, but is forced to expose herself to the threat of having to sell herself. Her dilemma is resolved by the machinations of the absconded sovereign, who works behind the scenes, truly a playwright, to bring about a somewhat *ad hoc* happy ending.) Hamlet's "I say, we will have no more marriages" is programmatic for Shakespeare's tragic period; the true fulfilment of his craft—the "marriage of true minds," which he had celebrated and embodied in the great romantic comedies—will not be granted him and us again until *Antony and Cleopatra*.

I see, then, in *Hamlet*, not so much the bafflement of the poet who cannot find an adequate embodiment for his feelings, but rather the shrinking from the knowledge he has gained. How is he to wrest truth from a medium which has no being apart from the social order and is by this very order corrupted to falsehood? How, in other words, is he to get rid of the third partner to every dialogue, when that partner stands revealed as an ear-poisoner? There are two possible ways, both explored by Shakespeare and both fraught with tragedy: the faith that language, in and by itself, *is* a true medium, at least in the poet's hands; or, conversely, that the poet can speak as

an absolute sovereign, who, by virtue of this creative sovereignty, endows speech with the *a priori* truth it must have if he is not to be a liar and accomplice to corruption. *Othello* and *King Lear* explore these alternatives.

The two tragedies move in opposite ways: the action of *Lear* is falling, the unravelling of the consequences of an initial fatal error, while that of *Othello* rises, turn by turn of the screw, to the consummation of a diabolic scheme. And since it is natural to fall but takes doing to rise, there is in the two plays a marked difference in wroughtness, in management. "Nature" is the key word for *Lear*, and its action and language are natural; there are virtually no "set pieces" and at the end language attains the ultimate in colloquial force. *Othello*, conversely, is, through its hero, so grandly eloquent that it has invited criticism; the "being wrought" of Othello's final speech may be taken in two senses, as applying not only to him, but to the play that bears his name.

If my provisional interpretation of these tragedies as explorations of absolute trust and absolute sovereignty is valid, we should expect their respective characters to be the reverse of what they are: it should be the play of sovereignty that is wrought, and the play of loving trust that is natural. But Shakespeare is concerned with discovering the consequences of two absolutist stances; and it is in the nature of absolutes that they bring forth their opposites. Lear falls into uttter impotence, while Othello is maneuvered into arrogating to himself the sovereignty of the priest-king, of the ultimate judge and bringer of sacrifices. The language of sovereignty turns at last into mad raving and the monosyllabic stammering of the "natural man"; the language of loving trust turns into pathetically futile self-assertion.

The poet of *Othello* is, to use a cliché, a playwright's playwright, I mean the cliché literally: Iago is a sort of built-in playwright, who, presented with a donnée and glorying in his subtlety and skill, sets about shaping a play from it. In counterpoise to his intense artfulness stands the love of Othello and Desdemona—a love pure and spontaneous, defiant of paternal authority and social custom, and quickly removed from the normal social matrix to the isolation of an island. Though the action begins with a marriage, Shakespeare studiously avoids any reference to the ceremony; Iago's question, "Are you fast married?" remains unanswered. We are led to think of the union,

not as a socially sanctioned contract, but as a pure love match, to which the order gives a belated and grudging consent.

Why then is it so easily destroyed? For even after we make full allowances for dramaturgical exigencies, Shakespeare leaves no doubt that Othello falls a ready, almost eager victim to Iago's insinuations. Othello gives the answer:

> Thinkst thou, I'd make a life of jealousy?
> . . . No, to be once in doubt
> Is once to be resolv'd. . . .
> I'll see before I doubt; when I doubt, prove,
> And on the proof there is no more but this—
> Away at once with love and jealousy.

There is an ominous rigor about this, the absolutist's rigor. Othello's commitment is unreserved—only it is not so much to Desdemona as to her truth. Out of it comes the ghastly command: "Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore!" For, paradoxically, the absolutist can never be sure enough of his absolute, since it is his sole support, "the fountain from the which my current runs or else dries up," and without which "Othello's occupation's gone!" Perdition is always lurking just beneath:

> Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,
> But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
> Chaos is come again.

Thus Othello is easily wrought; his love lacks body, has the intense thinness of absolutes. And it lacks irony. Being black, he sees nothing of Desdemona but her whiteness, and nothing is so fragile as whiteness. Truth is her sole dimension:

> Had she been true,
> If heaven would make me such another world
> Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
> I'd not have sold her for it.

What Othello refuses, in fact cannot afford, to acknowledge is the inevitable mediacy, and thus ambiguity, of human communion, the ineradicable irony inherent in language—its way of meaning more, or less, than what it seems to say, the way it has of making us say what we do not want to say or of preventing us from saying what we do want to say. Othello is pitifully inept at steering amid the shoals and reefs of speech:

Is he honest?
Honest, my lord?
Honest! ay, honest!
My lord, for aught I know.
What dost thou think?
Think, my lord?
Think, my lord!
By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought
Too hideous to be shown . . . If thou dost love me,
Show me thy thought.

He says "Show me thy thought," as though speech, if it is not mere echo, were the physical precipitate of what goes on in a man's mind. (Desdemona likewise is too pure for her own good; in the very act of refusing to say "whore," she does so twice over: "I cannot say 'whore.' It does abhor me now I speak the word.") It is this ineptness and refusal that leave the stage to the great ironist Iago, who thrives on equivocation and innuendo.

From Hamlet's dilemma, then, there is no refuge in absolute trust. Even if it were objectively justified (as with Desdemona it would have been), it is not sustainable in the infinite ambiguities of communion; it is too easily practiced upon and cannot, in its rigor, withstand the storms of circumstance. Shakespeare here practices upon Shakespeare, the verbal artificer upon the poet who, no longer buttressed by a stable and valid order, has staked all on the objective existence and knowability of Truth. The third term, eliminated by a desperate and wilful blindness, re-enters in the form of Iago—"honest Iago"—to expose the fragility and hubris of Othello's faith.

The opening scene of *King Lear* tests the viability of the other direct route to truth: the route of sovereignty. What we witness in this scene is more than the folly of an imperious and rash old man; we see the impossibility of speaking truly—of creating a true communion—where speech is conceived as sovereign. The loyal Kent is unmannerly, but that is not why he is banished; he is banished because he has sought

To come betwixt our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear.

The full, gapless identity of sentence and power, of word and act, is

the essence of Lear's conception of himself and his place. This same identity he imputes to his daughters; they are to create their realms by talking. Lear refuses to consider his daughters' words as words normally must be considered—under the categories of truth and falsehood. Rather, he assigns to them an automatic truth, or better (since truth is impossible under this dispensation) an automatic efficacy: what his daughters say is "operative," validates its meaning in the act of speech itself. From this it follows inevitably that he responds to Cordelia's "Nothing, my lord" with "Nothing will come of nothing." If speech creates what it states, Cordelia receives her precise due.

There is another occasion in the play, counterpointing the first scene, in which speech becomes sovereign and creative. When Edgar leads the blind Gloster to believe that he is standing on the edge of Dover Cliffs, his poetic lie attains the substantiality of fact, because there is, for Gloster, no extra-verbal fact to judge it by. Gloster is the poet's ideal audience, totally delivered over to the creative power of the word. But, unlike Lear, Edgar knows that this sovereign use of words is a pious fraud, justifiable only because it is directed toward a beneficent end; and later he calls his deception a fault. His conscious feigning throws Lear's self-deception into sharper relief, as his feigned madness is a foil to Lear's genuine raving.

And yet self-deceived is not an adequate word for Lear; his fall is into nature, and it derives its terrifying grandeur from being not passive but willed. At no point is Lear less than royal; he insists on it most in his madness, and it is then we most believe him. The reason is that he will not settle for less than his original claim; its impossibility means to him that he must divest himself of everything—of authority, of illusions, of shelter, and of reason, even of clothes: "Off, you lendings!" There is in him a passion for nakedness, a fierce will to strip off all that stands between him and the truth; it is this imperious refusal of the mediate that gives him his dignity. Even at the beginning he is not so much practiced upon as royally disdainful of the very possibility of deceit. How servile, for all his stature, does Othello appear next to him; how still more servile Gloster. These we see, again and again, led, counselled, deceived, allowing report to stand between themselves and reality. There is something ludicrous about Gloster's fall; Lear, even at his maddest, is never ludicrous.

For his fall is not into a fraud but into that marginal condition of man where all that is sophisticate and indirect, all art and all the artful constructs of rational discourse, are stripped away and the bare forked animal alone is left.

"They cannot touch me for coining; I am the king himself. Nature's above art in that respect"—these are the first words of Lear mad. He has yielded nothing; whatever coins the king issues are true coins, as whatever words he sovereignly speaks are true words. But the claim now has a different substance—the substance of nature rather than art. Lear is king now, not by virtue of his "title and additions," but because he is "crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds." A sphere is here penetrated which is beyond our mind's normal reach and understanding, a sphere where finally majesty and truth will confront each other, bless and forgive, and watch a world that will keep chasing shadows:

> We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage.
> When thou dost ask my blessing, I'll kneel down
> And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live
> And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
> At gilded butterflies . . .
> And take upon's the mystery of things
> As if we were God's spies.

With this, a point of no return is reached. We can only guess at the experience which lies behind (or better perhaps, in) the end of *Lear*; but it cannot be a sustainable one for the poet. The immediate is not for him; his office, like Edgar's, is to shape through the most mediate of media. If in *Othello* Shakespeare practiced upon himself, in *Lear* he transcends himself, goes beyond the confines of his art into a realm of naked truth so immediate that even lines like:

> Men must endure
> Their going hence e'en as their coming hither;
> Ripeness is all

assume a faintly false, patent-medicine ring, next to Cordelia's "And so I am, I am" and Lear's "Never, never, never, never, never."

With *Antony and Cleopatra* Shakespeare returns, as the form of the title indicates, to the theme of *Romeo and Juliet*, the question of

how, in a world of discord, error, and deceit, the primary human union is to be created. But the similarity serves only to point up the difference. Already, in *Troilus and Cressida*, the unifying social structure had disappeared, and the problem had been how, in the clash of armies and the calculations of diplomacy, love could survive. The despairingly cynical answer was the dismissal of the lovers into separate sordid and futile lives, with the epilogue given to the Pander. But now the themes of sovereignty and love, of *Lear* and *Othello*, are joined: the lovers themselves are sovereign. They are neither embedded in a social order nor torn apart by two conflicting ones, but move with imperial freedom in the strange servitude and into the stranger liberation of love.

All that Shakespeare has bitterly discovered since *Romeo and Juliet* makes up the substance of *Antony and Cleopatra*. No longer is the heroine pure and true; she is dark as the dark lady of the sonnets, devious and meretricious, "the whole world's commonplace." No longer is there a benign or even a reluctant social order to bless the union; love defies what order there is, even self-interest and manly virtue. There is, to be sure, a marriage, designed to unite the riven state and applauded by all whose sense of order is architectural rather than musical: the marriage between Antony and Octavia. But it is, as Agrippa says, "a studied, not a present thought, by duty ruminated." The final marriage, on the other hand, is self-blessed and self-celebrated; it is the conclusion and apotheosis of a union, not its beginning, and it sanctifies retroactively all manner of degradation.

Let me, at this point, briefly recapitulate. Shakespeare begins with an implicit trust in the social order as the ultimate guarantor of true human communion—the trust on which all ordinary discourse rests and which, in so far as it is justified, leaves the poet free to move and please us, to be—in however noble a sense—an entertainer. With the growing awareness, first of the order's impotence, then of its instability and corruption, the poet is forced into different roles. The first of these—the poet as surety—being found wanting, he then tests two possibilities of direct truth: trust in the purity of language, and reliance upon the automatic truth of creative speech. Both of these attempts to do without the third, the social term, are bound to end tragically; the nature of his medium forbids directness.

This would seem to exhaust the possibilities, and in a sense it

does. But one thing remains: to foreswear the absolutes, to surrender with open eyes to falsehood and thus to gain sovereignty and truth. This, I think, is what happens in *Antony and Cleopatra*, though it sounds unpleasantly paradoxical in so abstract a form.

Neither truth nor sovereignty exists objectively in the play, even at the end: Antony (like Romeo) kills himself upon the feigned news of Cleopatra's death; Cleopatra's gratuitous lying to Caesar about her jewels keeps her to the end in an ambiguous light. Sovereignty is not merely lost; Antony's empty assertions of it betray him into posturing and fustian. And yet the play leaves us, like no other play by Shakespeare, with a sense of triumph that asks for no compensations beyond it. These lovers, though dead, are not "poor sacrifices" but victors; they are not lovers thwarted but lovers united—and united with a legitimacy greater and in a truth more inclusive and rich than any of their forerunners.

All this we know, as it were, despite the facts. The sense of triumph which the play engenders springs from its immense daring, which, if it were not ultimately made good, would be mere defiance. For better than four acts we have observed Antony in his various degradations, Cleopatra in her ambiguous stratagems, both in their debauches. And now, at the very end, Cleopatra, in order to convince Iras of the necessity of suicide, tells her and us of the humiliations that await them if they should be taken back to Rome:

> The quick comedians
> Extemporally will stage us and present
> Our Alexandrian revels; Antony
> Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
> Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
> I' th' posture of a whore.

This is, even to the boy actor, the precise recapitulation of what we the spectators have just been witnessing—which is to say, it is a dare to us to resist the poet's will and intention, to free ourselves from the power of his immediate word, to find footing somewhere outside it, even if that outside is no more than the scenes he himself has just put before us. What happens here is that we are compelled, against common sense and the everyday certitudes about truth and falsehood, to accept illusion *as* illusion, trickery *as* trickery, and in this acceptance find truth. We are compelled to surrender to the poet's will—

knowingly and so unconditionally that *we* will it and triumph in it. In other words, we are made to participate fully in the poet's own mastery and his own acceptance.

There are no villains in *Antony and Cleopatra*, no Iagos and Edmunds; for these are the hypostatizations of an absolutism that insists on pure truth and thus must bring forth pure falsehood. But there is a man who falls disastrously short of what the situation demands of him: Enobarbus, the man of common sense, who sees Antony's folly and Cleopatra's trickery for "what they are." He is, we might say, the man who leaves before the play is over, convinced—as well he might be—that the rest can be nothing but empty mouthings. He dies of self-contempt, enslaved to Antony by his desertion as he never would have been by loyalty. Had he been true, he would have been released to serve Caesar freely, as Dercetas is. And as we are. For it is the peculiarity of this play that it dismisses us into the world of prose and Caesar not with the sense that too great a price has been paid to restore an order in which mediocre men can live, but with a certain composure, because no more is rendered unto Caesar than is his.

A case could perhaps be made that with the death of the lovers the Roman Empire is united and will now enter upon its Augustan Age—so that Antony and Cleopatra serve, by their death, a restorative purpose not altogether unlike that of Romeo and Juliet. But the argument would be specious. The mighty opposites are not reconciled; they celebrate each its incommensurable victory. In his attempt to separate the lovers, Caesar *is* "an ass unpolicied"; poetry has established its own realm, in which the writ of Caesar does not run. Shakespeare here awakens in safely domesticated prosaists some sense of the capriciousness and infinite variety of this mistress, language, whom most of us tend to think of as a lawfully wedded, rather dull wife. Poetry, properly understood, will undermine our linguistic certitudes, call into question our faith in the verbal order as representing the order of reality, and in the social order as an adequate guarantor of truth. Its immediate impact, therefore, is disruptive. But the poet cannot leave it at that; his ultimate purpose is to establish a more perfect union. This is no easy matter, because, unlike our Founding Fathers, he has no natural law to fall back on; practically his initial discovery was that in language there is only positive law,

and no footing is provided outside it. So he takes language unto himself, not for her purity (she has none) nor as her sovereign lord (she must somehow remain tied to truth) but as she is. By doing so, he renders her true to herself, that being the only truth she is capable of. And while we are domestic tyrants or cuckolds to her (mostly both), she becomes a true wife to him.

From this, I confess, unduly metaphorical description it might seem that poetry is a closed system, without relevance or meaning beyond itself, and that therefore those critics are right who describe poetry as autonomous, even mute. The more perfect union would appear to be merely one between language and the poet, of no use to the rest of us. But I don't think that is so, at least for Shakespeare. For though a language which is true only to itself is not, in any intelligible sense, true at all, still he who has once been drawn into that magic circle will not be the same when he comes out again. When words return to their prosaic functions, they will carry with them some of the magic potency they had inside the circle, and they will impart it to the things they stand for. That is to say, language will be somewhat less a mere system of signs and somewhat more a substance, somewhat less a token currency easily manipulable by the wielders of power, and somewhat more a gold currency, with an inherent value. I don't know whether the history of language bears out Gresham's Law, bad currency driving out good, which becomes the hoarded possession of fewer and fewer people. It does sometimes seem as though today verbal gold were considered altogether too rare for circulation and so were struck only into special medals intended for numismatists. But these are matters beyond my scope. As for Shakespeare, his bounty is like Antony's: there is no winter in it; an autumn it is that grows the more by reaping.

Linear Movement

By RICHARD R. O'KEEFE

This
horse
that
jolts cracks
my skull
still
takes
me
this horse
stops
only
when
my brain
snaps
thrown
skull cobblestone
to clatter on
mind mush
of crap crushed
under hooves
my will
fistfulls
still
unclenched
of his
unkillable
mane
my last world
wild
as his
continual
eye.

This is RICHARD R. O'KEEFE's first publication. He has done graduate work in English at the Pennsylvania State University and Johns Hopkins University and is now teaching at Kent State University.

■ BOOKS

Ethics via Biology

By GEORGE R. GEIGER

For some time now a strange academic pursuit has been taking place—the moral philosopher being pursued by the scientist, chiefly the life scientist. "Pursuit" seems the appropriate word, since the philosopher for years has been beating a coy retreat; although "coy" may not be the appropriate term. Witness this sentiment quoted from C. D. Broad, almost a paradigm case of recent British thought, a sentiment which is hardly calculated to appease or encourage the pursuing scientist:

> We can contemplate with a smile or a sigh the waxing and waning of each cheap and easy solution which is propounded for our admiration as the last word of "science." We know beforehand that it will be inadequate; and that it will try to disguise its inadequacy by ignoring some of the facts, by distorting others, and by that curious inability to distinguish between ingenious fancies and demonstrated truths which seems to be the besetting weakness of the man of purely scientific training when he steps outside his laboratory. And we can amuse ourselves, if our tastes lie in that direction, by noticing which well-worn fallacy or old familiar inadequacy is characteristic of the latest gospel, and whether it is well or ill-disguised in its new dress.

Nevertheless, the villain still pursues. Biologists, chiefly the evolutionists (i.e., those who take evolution seriously; and, one may add, how else can it be taken?) have been insisting that a meaningful approach to human conduct and the judgments thereof must take into account the findings of the life sciences, chiefly of genetics and of the biosocial learning process. Without these contributions, moral knowledge turns into something like "intuition of what is fitting," a contribution in the Broad style. Among the biologists engaged in this chase are Julian Huxley, Dobzhansky, Leake, Waddington, and it might be noted that anthropologists like the late Clyde Kluckhohn have also joined in.

Philosophers, at least of the linguistic and positivistic persuasion, have been amused if unworried. A canonical set of shibboleths has been

able to preserve values from the hot pursuit of science, magic words like "the genetic fallacy," "the naturalistic fallacy," "no connection between 'is' language and 'ought' language," and "deontology." These are supposed to provide prophylaxsis for any contamination the realm of moral philosophy might suffer from contact with biological data. But C. H. Waddington, for one, refuses to be put off.* Dr. Waddington is a distinguished British geneticist, professor at Edinburgh University, author of many technical works and of the highly-regarded *The Scientific Attitude*. His latest book attempts to meet frontally the philosophers in whose circle he has been moving (Wittgenstein was a friend of his), and it presents a thesis to explain not only why man is an ethical animal but, still more daring, to recommend what kinds of ethical judgment *should* be made.

Whatever the value of his present study, there is more chance of its being given a hearing now than even a few years ago. For philosophy gives the appearance of beginning to emerge from the long dark tunnel of triviality. Linguistic analysis as the sole test of value discussion seems to have lost something of its hypnotic fascination. As sophisticated an aficianada as the English philosopher Mary Warnock can report in a recent work on ethics that "concentration upon the most general kind of evaluative language, combined with the fear of committing the naturalistic fallacy, has led too often to discussions of grading fruit, or choosing fictitious games equipment, and ethics as a serious subject has been left further and further behind. But I believe that the most boring days are over."

In one of his opening pages, Waddington makes this blunt challenge:

> The major political force which is shaping man's history in our time is the conviction . . . that to die at eighty after a healthy life using inanimate sources of power is, in some real and undeniable sense, better than to die at forty after a life of back-breaking labour, hunger and sickness. It is, in my opinion, merely a confession of intellectual inadequacy if the western intellectual finds himself forced to confess that he cannot find any way in which this can be rationally justified. Yet that is the position in which the official philosophy, of Great Britain at least, seems to be.

He pushes this point, as a biologist would, by arguing naturalistically that the intellect is an instrument developed by evolutionary pressures to come to terms with things, and that to divorce it from such a context is "to run away to an ivory tower." The running away is apparent even—the word should be "especially"—when the intellect is engaged in moral speculation. But Waddington does not simply issue rhetorical pronunciamentos against positivism and linguistic philosophy. He devotes a number

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**The Ethical Animal*. By C. H. Waddington. New York, Atheneum, 1961. $5.00.

of his opening chapters to a cogent criticism of what has (or maybe "had") become the institutionalized philosophy of the English-speaking world—well, the academic world. We can simply report his complaints in a staccato fashion.

He regards the all but canonized Wittgenstein, with whom Waddington engaged in long personal discussions, as a poet *malgré lui*, one who recognized in an almost Wordsworthian sense the unspeakable otherness of reality, and whose later work ends—to use Wittgenstein's well-known phrase—by leaving everything as it is. In the course of his poetizing, Wittgenstein clearly recognizes that all we can do is to clear up the ground of language, but to clear ground while still using language (even a logistical one) is, as Waddington puts it, to combine (impossibly) the tasks of Hercules and Sisyphus—to cleanse the linguistic stables which at the same time are being continually befouled. Ethical speculation and decision cannot wait until a perfectly disinfected language arrives.

More than this, the approach of linguistic philosophy is a static one in which the *Oxford Dictionary* takes over as the final authority. But a dictionary is, as it were, a textbook in anatomy whereas language—like life itself—is dynamic and growing. Waddington asks finally whether contemporary vogue has contributed anything to the oldest of philosophic platitudes: that one should be very careful in the use of words. Which may be a necessary but is hardly a sufficient basis for moral theory.

Waddington also tilts courageously at the use of phrases like "genetic fallacy" and "naturalistic fallacy" to estop rational discussion of ethics. We can only outline without elaboration several of his points. For one thing, he refuses to accept the complete divorce between logic and psychology, which is so fundamental a presupposition for much of modern thought. Factual and logical questions must undoubtedly be separated but not to the point, Waddington argues, of ignoring the problem why are there logical (or ethical) concepts at all? To call out "genetic fallacy" (i.e., because *A* is derived from *a*, therefore *A* is *nothing but a*) will not arrest many scientists, since, as stated, it is so elementary that it has probably deceived very few of them, and if made more subtle it simply loses its point. "The true nature of, for instance, an Ascidian would be almost impossible to guess if one did not examine its embryonic stages and investigate its genesis. It is very difficult indeed to believe that similar types of thought would fail to be valuable if applied to the analysis of linguistic usage." Genesis of language is as significant as current usage and, adds Waddington, genetic analysis of the ethical concepts is as valuable as a phenomenological dissection of the moral experience.

This brings us to a preliminary statement of the thesis of the book. The problem is, first, how does man become an ethicizing animal; and,

second, how can his various ethical systems be appraised from what can be called a metaethical point of view? Waddington uses the term "wisdom" in connection with this latter task, perhaps an infelicitous word since in current discussion it tends to connote, as opposed to "knowledge," a non-natural quality. This, of course, is not what Waddington has in mind.

As to the first problem, he comes up with a strictly genetic answer:

> The human infant is born with probably a certain innate capacity to acquire ethical beliefs but without any specific beliefs in particular. During the first few months of life processes go on by which these innate potentialities become realized. The infant becomes moulded into the sort of being who, we may say, "goes in for" having ethical beliefs. It becomes what one might call an "ethics participant" or an "ethicizing" being.

In this primitive development, authority plays a key role. It is the modus operandi through which information is passed on from one generation to another. Without such passage, human evolution, which has become social and cultural rather than exclusively biological, could not take place. Therefore, contrary to the emotive theory of value, imperatives have true ethical significance. A command can become an "ought" if the very evolutionary process depends upon its efficacy.

The second problem—a much more serious one—is handled modestly by Waddington. He admits his approach is conjectural ("stochastic" is the word he uses) and depends on our recognizing a "correct" course of evolution, just as we recognize "health" as the correct functioning of an organism. He insists that this is an immanent criterion, not forced upon the process from outside. To be sure, "if an individual approaches a nutritionist and says that he prefers to grow in an abnormal and unhealthy manner, the nutritionist can do no more than tell him that if he does so he will be out of step with nature." If the devastating reply is "So what?" it's not easy to see what the riposte would be. It will be remembered that Socrates himself told us that, although physicians could make us well, only the philosopher could determine whether we *ought* to be well.

Dr. Waddington is not impressed by such Socratic impudence. He wishes to maintain that it is possible to discover a supra-ethical standard (one of biological "wisdom") that will provide a way for judging among alternative ethical beliefs. Thus, he is deliberately attempting to bypass the naturalistic fallacy (i.e., that ethics can be reduced to something else, say, the social sciences), although "bypass" may be too mild a term. For him the very "function of ethicizing is to mediate the progress of human evolution," and this progress exhibits a direction "which is as well or ill defined as the concept of physiological health."

Most of the book is an elaboration, often quite technical, of the points

already made: that in the results of evolution it is possible to discern an overall direction of change, and that although this may not be itself regarded as "good," it may provide the criterion for choosing among the various goods of our experience.

Basic to Waddington's theme is his argument that contemporary philosophers have been insufficiently impressed by the work of biology since Darwin. Physics has captured the philosophic attention, above all in epistemology and philosophy of science, but how can men like Ayer and Ryle, who write about mind and knowing, ignore completely the facts of evolution? It is inconceivable that "one can talk much sense about the relation between man and the external world if one leaves out of account the fact that man has been brought into being by evolution in relation to the external world."

Even less legitimately can the moral philosopher cut himself loose from the continuum of social evolution. When someone like A. C. Ewing—a distinguished British ethicist—feels that it is not illogical to say the whole course of evolution has itself been harmful, Waddington responds that such an argument could be made only if man were to be regarded as outside nature and judging it—a characteristic failing of non-naturalistic philosophy. For "if harmfulness is to be assessed entirely from the point of view of the products of evolution, and without bringing in any exterior, non-evolutionary point of reference, it is I think illogical (in the sense of being a contradiction in terms) to suppose that the whole evolutionary process is harmful." Waddington's approach is thus clearly a transactional one, both in theory of knowledge and theory of value, and it is unfortunate that he makes only one casual reference to John Dewey, to whom he is so close in many ways.

The technical parts of the book, dealing chiefly with the genetic mechanisms and the biosocial process of early learning, add up to something like the following (and, without the necessary elaboration found in the text, a summary will seem more dogmatic than it should): Evolutionary systems tend to develop in the direction of greater efficiency. Following Julian Huxley, he calls this anagenesis. The criteria for "direction" and "efficiency"? Well, principally that the organism develops so as to control its environment and/or remain independent of it, as for instance in the organism's ability to maintain a constant temperature. On the human level, anagenesis is largely a cultural phenomenon depending, of course, upon man's ability to communicate, to turn signs into symbols, and to pass on information to succeeding generations. Now, to pass on information requires an authority-bearing system—although the system can easily be internalized, as in the superego. (Incidentally, Waddington believes his findings are quite consonant with those of Freud.)

> The functioning of a socio-genetic system depends essentially on the existence of the role of authority-acceptor. In man the formation of this role is brought about by processes which involve the internalization of authority. And some aspects of this internalized authority have the character for which we give the name ethical. Thus "going in for ethics," or "ethicizing," is for man an integral part of the role of the taught or the authority-acceptor, without the existence of which his cultural socio-genetic evolutionary system could not operate.

This is not the "moral sense" of philosophic tradition, and it is certainly far from the *a priori* imperative of Kant or the "intuition of fittingness" of current ethics. Waddington is writing about a social and learned response, although he recognizes, in Piaget's words, that "before the intervention of adults or older children there are in the child's conduct certain rules which we have called motor rules. But they are not imperative, they do not constitute duties but only spontaneous regularities of behavior." These regularities become truly the bearer of an ethic when authority is recognized and imperatives develop and become internalized. Such a process, Waddington maintains, is an integral part of human evolution. "Ethical beliefs play an essential role in enabling the human race to continue evolving in a direction which in general terms continues that of animal anagenesis." To recognize this is biological wisdom, it constitutes a metaethics.

Waddington is by no means, however, a naive optimist or a believer in the inevitability of progress (anagenesis). Actually he has a chapter on "the fall of man," recognizing that in the prodigious step from the lower to the human animal level something very much like original sin may well have come about. Yet he is a moderately confident humanist, and courageously presents a point of view which, to say the least, does not hide its vulnerability from the contemporary philosophic analyst. There are many unfulfilled promises in the book, certain exaggerations of emphasis (as on authority), and its final social and political suggestions—in a crazy and fugitive period such as this—seem rather futile.

But having said this, we must add that *The Ethical Animal* is required reading for the contemporary philosopher. The paralysis which has gripped British and American value theory needs something like the shock treatment provided by Dr. Waddington. To err at times, as any book as ambitious and provocative as this is bound to do, is much more healthy than to refuse to make judgments at all. And to discuss how man came to be an ethical animal in the first place is—to put it conservatively—at least as significant as to analyze forever how "ethical" is used in everyday speech.

Implications of Mortality

The Meaning of Death. Edited by Herman Feifel. McGraw-Hill, 1960. $6.50.

Dr. Feifel suggests that this collection of papers may prove useful to those concerned with persons facing death, the bereaved, "professional workers" (presumably doctors; possibly psychologists and other ministers; less possibly nurses; still less possibly morticians, insurance agents, and lawyers), and to students of "personality" and "the social scene" diligently cumulating their antheaps of knowledge. How discrete; how altruistic; and how wrong. This is not a manual with which something can be done, like available works on the law of wills, *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Dying,* a litany for the dead, Armed Forces regulations for composing and transporting cadavers, or a forensic medical tome analyzing variously mutilated and putrified remains to determine the cause of death. One contributor, Gerald Aronson, does offer some ambiguous advice to the physician treating the terminally ill, which appears more convincing in practice (chess on the final morning) than in theory (be honest, but not too honest; tell the truth but sustain hope). But, in sum, this is not a useful book.

It *is* an intriguing one. It does not grip like the death of Ivan Ilych, the death of Petya Rostov, or the death of the old Prince Bolkonski because it is a book for intellectuals, not people; it does not grip like Freud because the writers are not, for the most part, as penetrating. But it is a departure from the run of psychology; haltingly, and with much indirectness, it returns us to ourselves, and *that,* Dr. Feifel, is the subject. Our mother, our wife, our child, yes; even our beloved professor; *you,* sir; and me. Like stones on an open road, the rhetoric of scholars obscures facts learned by every child—

> Doctor, Doctor, will I die?
> Yes, my child, and so will I.

Aside from a 1934 piece of Jung's which opens in an Olympian manner but ends (as does the otherwise sensible Gardner Murphy) in scraggly thoughts on telepathy, and a 1948 account of children's comments on death by Maria Nagy, whose insight is decidedly inferior to that of her subjects, all the papers are recent and most were prepared for this volume

or an antecedent symposium organized by Dr. Feifel at the 1956 American Psychological Association convention. Has this interest in a subject psychologists have eschewed been awakened by the Bomb—or by government research grants (several papers report work supported by the Veterans Administration or Public Health Service)? In any event, it is a pleasant change to see them concerned with something significant.

In the most brilliant of the opening group of philosophical essays, Herbert Marcuse argues, insofar as I understand him, that society and not nature is the villain. Marcuse is hardly consistent, recognizing the anxiety and fear of death—"inevitable . . . incalculable, ubiquitous . . . the tabooed limit of human freedom"—as "the most rational attitude and feeling" and "one of the strongest factors of progress in the struggle with nature." But he suggests not merely that society makes of death another cohesive institutional force, with which we may agree, but that the death instinct has an historical character (we might say the same of the nose), and, before we can blink, has veered precisely about, contending that the "biological condition of man does not have to be the inexhaustible source of anxiety. It may well be . . . the opposite, . . . the stimulus . . . to strive for a guiltless existence, and to determine its end—to subject it to human autonomy." It is easier for a philosopher to conjugate "autonomy" than to control his bowels after eating too many prunes. Jung is rather more convincing in acknowledging his limitations and ours:

> . . . when an aging person secretly shudders and is even mortally afraid at the thought that his reasonable expectation of life now amounts to only so many years, then we are painfully reminded of certain feelings within our own breast; we look away and turn the conversation to some other topic. . . . Naturally we have on hand for every eventuality one or two suitable banalities about life which we occasionally hand out to the other fellow, such as "everyone must die sometime," "one doesn't live forever," etc. But when one is alone and it is night and so dark and still that one hears and sees nothing but the thoughts which add and subtract the years, and the long row of disagreeable facts which remorselessly indicate how far the hand of the clock has moved forward, and the slow, irresistible approach of the wall of darkness which will eventually engulf everything you love, possess, wish, strive, and hope for—then all our profundities about life slink off to some undiscoverable hiding place, and fear envelops the sleepless one like a smothering blanket.

Papers by Nagy, Robert Kastenbaum, and Feifel in the section on Developmental Orientation set forth observations on the attitudes to death of children, adolescents, the normal, and the mentally ill. The following section on the Death Concept in Cultural and Religious Fields

is notable mainly for Frederick Hoffman's beautifully written "Mortality and Modern Literature," in some ways a companion piece to Marcuse's, which discusses the contribution of historical and cultural continuity to the meaningful life and death, the "secular grace" of modern man. "It is not so much that the self needs a God," Hoffman observes, "but that it cannot (or does not wish to) stand alone. It is a comfort to know that patterns of behavior, actual or imagined, are repetitious, shared archetypically with the entire history of the race. . . . This is not to defeat death but to gain a kind of immortality in the sharing of undying patterns."

Edgar Jackson thinks that "The religious institution in our society continues to be the custodian of the bold, frank look at . . . the facts of life and death." Custodian of the words, perhaps; but among parishioners who worship sex, martinis, and well-mown lawns the facts of death seem reserved, rather, to delinquents, hoodlums, the military, and the men of science who bring us daily closer to that transcendent truth. Seeking to engage science in the service of God, Jackson, too, dwells on parapsychology—as if He would stoop to tricks Houdini surpassed.

The final section on Clinical and Experimental Studies contains papers by Arnold Hutschnecker, Aronson, and August Kasper on the doctor and the dying patient, which, while not startlingly original, are sensitive and honest and convey the impression that they have seen people die and been troubled by it. By and large, the doctors, who have some familiarity with death, show up better in this volume than the Ph.D.'s like Irving Alexander and Arthur Adlerstein, who tell us about the percentage of fifty students replying this way and that on a questionnaire, or Curt Richter who, having killed rats by clipping their whiskers, concludes that "rats as well as human beings die from a reaction of hopelessness." How nice to know this is also true of rats.

The more generic human requirement is to *live* with hopelessness, or, rather, in a hopeless situation, for despite the fatigue, stupefaction, depression, and anxiety manifest within the normal emotional range; the alcoholism, ennui, and madness beyond it; and the suicides who fly mothlike into the flame, it is astonishing how hopeful or, at any rate, positive is our normal response to this situation. No doubt we are in the position of the Londoners who, carrying on under the Nazi bombs, were falsely praised for bravery. What else *could* they do?

Hutschnecker states, as have others, that death is more feared by the living than by the dying. Weariness, weakness, and numbness often dull both the interest in life and the impulse to fear—at least, it appeared so in several deaths I witnessed—and, in a stroke, the ground falls away so fast there is little time for any feeling. Let us hope our lapsing conscious-

ness dwells more on fond memories than on fears; but one dying old man, his thick, arched neck so arthritic it held his bald head rigid above the pillow, cried *Hilfe! Hilf mir!,* and holding his hand did not stop the cries, as the terrible cries of Ivan Ilych were finally stopped by his son's kiss.

The good thing and the brave thing about this book is its attempt to look into the heart of darkness, although we may well wonder if the authors are brave because they dare to look or because they see nothing. I do not mean to insult the authors, who are, for the most part, intelligent and earnest, but to suggest that their effort fails, as all such efforts must, because the darkness is impenetrable.

It is a conceit of intellectuals that they can shed light on any subject they choose to gaze upon; and underlying much of this book is the further illusion that repression is invariably damaging and the truth will make men strong. C. W. Wahl does note that the fear of death, "because of the realistic and uncontrollable nature of its referent," may constitute "a solitary exception" to this rule; but he is mistaken in that *solitary.* What about the belief that one is handsome, kind, loved, good, important, clever, necessary, and so forth? We may assert, on the contrary, that truth can be administered only in small doses sweetened with vanity, and that it is just as well that we receive so little of it at any one time.

As we examine the scene presented to us by our parents—the oversize, ludicrous game of history and our more meaningful personal pursuits and pleasures—and its certain end, we perceive that there are, in fact, *two* ends, two visions of death, if you will. Neither is exactly painless or pleasant, but one we can somehow accept (not because we want to, but because we have to), talk about, think about, and even write books about. It is a composed death at the end of a satisfactory life, it is a death to save our beloved or serve our cause, it is a death with chaperones, a death in the pages of the New York *Times,* a death in context, with heirs. The other death we can hardly bear to contemplate, and I do not know quite how to write about it, but I know very well what it is, and so, I think, do most of us at times, but not when God is merciful. It is the end of all ends, not just the end but the absence of history, and the absence of anyone or anything which might have come after.

The first death is the traditional image of a body in repose, surrounded by the family, and the body, in the child's phrase, feels "a tiny little bit"; the second, that of Kafka's roach stamped underfoot by God, after ants have eaten the remains and the stain has washed away. The first is the happy death of Ivan Ilych, Tolstoy's unconvincing final twist; the second, the terrible truth he saw before, which the paralyzed Count Bezukhov saw, and which Prince Andrew embraced so fiercely (with all her love,

Natasha could not only not part him from it, but could not even get him to notice her).

"If the world has any meaning," one of Malraux's characters observes in *The Walnut Trees of Altenburg,*

> death should find its place in it, as it did in the Christian world; if humanity's fate is a story with a point, then death is a part of life: but if not, then life is a part of death. . . . If mental structures disappear forever like the plesiosaurus, if civilizations succeed one another only in order to cast man into the bottomless pit of nothingness, if the human adventure only subsists at the price of a merciless metamorphosis, it's of little consequence that men communicate their ideas and their methods to each other for a few centuries; for man is a chance element, and, fundamentally speaking, the world consists of oblivion.

That's another way of putting the two deaths. And which kind will be ours?

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